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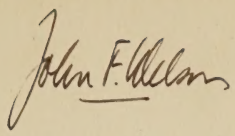

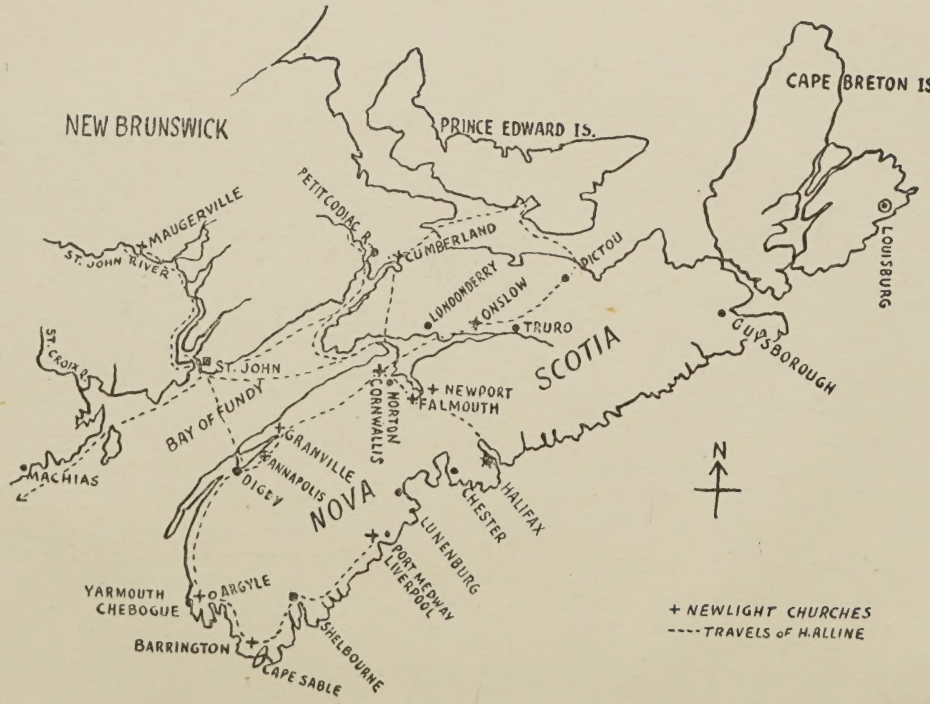
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Volume VII

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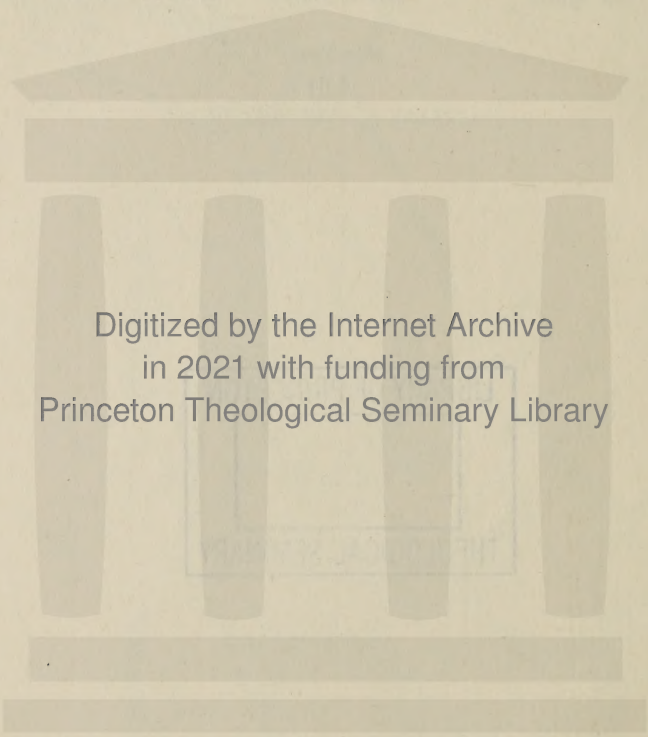
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THE GREAT AWAKENING
IN
NOVA SCOTIA
1776 - 1809

By
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HARTFORD, CONN.
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1948

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PREFACE

Because of the nature of the subject, the sources for this study include both historical and theological works. These, for the most part, were available in the Libraries at Harvard University, or in one or another of the following Boston libraries: Boston Public, Congregational, Massachusetts Historical Society, New England Historical and Genealogical Society. A few rare works were examined in the John Carter Brown Library at Providence, R. I., and a microfilm of Henry Alline's *Thanksgiving Sermon* (1782) was obtained through the courtesy of the H. E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Copies of the unpublished *Records of the Church of Jebogue,* and *A Statement of the Circumstances of the Protestant Dissenters of Nova Scotia* (1769), were made available through the kindness of Dr. D. C. Harvey, Provincial Archivist, Halifax, N. S. Valuable assistance was also obtained through correspondence with Miss Helen Beals of Acadia College Library, and Dr. George E. Wilson of Dalhousie University. Use was made of unpublished theses by Miss Katherine Relief Williams of McGill University, and by the Rev. Kenneth Sullivan of Dalhousie University. One of the pleasantest parts of the research has been the help given by old and new friends who have sent old books, letters and manuscripts, or have located and borrowed rare works for me. In all, more than one hundred primary sources and four hundred secondary works were consulted. The most useful of these are cited fully in the footnotes, together with the present location of the rarer books.

I wish to express my thanks to Professor Johannes A. C. F. Auer of Harvard Divinity School, and Professor William Warren Sweet of the University of Chicago for reading the manuscript and for helpful suggestions. The generosity of the Frank S. Brewer Prize, which makes possible the publication, and the kindness of Professor Matthew Spinka of Hartford Seminary, Professor Robert Hastings Nichols of Union Seminary, and Professor Ray C. Petry of Duke University in editing the text

are gratefully acknowledged. Finally, the assistance of my wife, Irene Macdonald Armstrong, has been constant and indispensable throughout this study.

Maurice W. Armstrong.

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Sketch map of Nova Scotia ..... *Frontispiece*

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CHAPTER ONE

THE NEWLIGHTS

"Fly from Enthusiasm! It is the Pest,
Bane, Poison, Fury, and the rest."
—John Byrom.

In the year 1799 the Bishop of Nova Scotia reported to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts that the Province was being troubled by "an enthusiastic and dangerous spirit" among the sect called "Newlights," whose religion seemed to be a "strange jumble of New England Independency and Behmenism."[1] Through the teaching of these "ignorant mechanics and common labourers," the people were being excited to "a pious frenzy," and "a rage for dipping" prevailed over all the western counties. It was further believed by the Bishop and the Anglican clergy that these sectaries were engaged in a plan for "a total Revolution in Religion and Civil Government."

This estimate is quite in keeping with the prevalent view of the eighteenth century that "enthusiasm has something in it of madness, superstition or folly. Most of the sects that fall short of the Church of England have in them strong tinctures of enthusiasm."[2] In the following pages an attempt will be made to discover the origin, teachings, and influence of the Nova Scotian Newlights, and to clarify their position in Canadian religious history. Because, as Bishop Inglis recognized, the movement was a continuation of the great revival of religion which occurred in New England between 1740 and 1744, it may properly be called "The Great Awakening in Nova Scotia."[3] Its roots, however, lie much deeper than the eighteenth century, or even than the "Theosophick Philosophy" of Jacob Boehme. They are to be found in the recurrent phenomenon in Christianity, of periods of extraordinary emotional activity when immense energies are released with surprising results in individuals and in society.

1 *Classified Digest of the Records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1701-1892* (London, 1893), 118.
2 Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*, No. 201, Oct. 20, 1711 (London).
3 See Joseph Tracy, *The Great Awakening* (Boston, 1842); C. H. Maxson, *The Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies* (Chicago, 1920); W. M. Gewehr, *The Great Awakening in Virginia, 1740-1790* (Durham, N. C., 1930).

Such periods occur from the time of the Montanists in the second century, to that of the Pietists and Methodists in the eighteenth.[4] In America they are especially associated with the peculiar social and religious problems of the frontier, and the struggle of the pioneer with his environment.[5]

PURITANISM AND THE FRONTIER

New England Puritanism early felt the effects of the frontier. As the children of the founders came of age, it was discovered that they had not experienced that inner working of God in the soul which must precede admission into the visible church. By 1662 the church was actually becoming a minority in the towns, which greatly interfered with the rule of the saints. Under these circumstances a compromise was reached in the so-called "Half-Way Covenant," the effect of which was to create two rolls of church-membership, one regenerate and in full communion, the other unregenerate and merely "owning the covenant." As time passed, the custom of "consenting to the covenant of grace," or "renewing the covenant," was substituted for vital religious experience and there was a most un-puritanical trend towards moralism and dependence upon outward "means."[6] " 'Tis too Evident to be denied," cried the Rev. Samuel Whitman of Farmington, in the Election Sermon before the General Court of Connecticut in 1714,

> "that Religion is on the Wane among us, 'Tis Languishing in all Parts of the Land . . . . Is not Religion degenerated into an empty Form? . . . . We are risen up a Generation that have in a great Measure forgot the Errand of our Fathers."[7]

Actually, the grandsons of the Puritans had other matters to occupy their minds. Amid the crash of falling trees, the raising of barns, and the life-and-death struggle with the Indians, it was not easy to remember that these things were not "the chief end of man." The danger, the isolation, the freedom from restraint and the opportunities for success bred self reliance and a spirit of independence which did not fit in with the code of the

4 Umphrey Lee, *The Historical Background of Early Methodist Enthusiasm* (New York, 1931).
5 P. G. Mode, *The Frontier Spirit in American Christianity* (New York, 1923).
6 P. G. E. Miller, "Declension in a Bible Commonwealth" (Reprinted from the *Proceedings* of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, 1942).
7 Quoted G. L. Walker, *Some Aspects of the Religious Life of New England* (Boston, 1897), 73.

standing order. Ministers complained that many of their church members were "going above their Estates and Degrees," not merely in the matter of ignoring the proper and prescribed form of dress for their particular class, but also, "in a Contempt of those that are by far their Betters: the Child behaving himself Proudly against the Ancient, the Base against the Honourable."[8] Every Election and Fast Day sermon was made an occasion for a lament over these departures from the old way. To the frontiersman, they only served to strengthen the conviction that he had little in common with the clergy, and to foster the spirit of resentment and defiance which was already present. The whole teaching of Calvinistic theology began to be doubted and questioned, not because of the influence of deism and of the Age of Reason, but because of the practical, social situation on the frontier. "The ideals of the frontier are equality, freedom of opportunity, unrestrained liberty of exploitation, individual success, faith in the common man."[9] Such distinctions as "elect" and "reprobate" were incompatible with the temper of self-made men. The growing emphasis on "means" and "works," which developed after the Reforming Synod (1679), reflects this same tendency. A generation which had tested its strength against naked Iroquois and Abenakis, and which was conquering the wilderness with axe and wedge, did not hesitate also to take out of the hands of the Almighty the solemn business of justification. Theologically this attitude was known as Arminianism, but it was largely an indigenous growth, the expression of the demand of a hard-working, heavy-drinking, and self-reliant people for a religion more adapted to their lives.

There is one other social factor which enters into the religious situation in this period, that is the class struggle which developed in New England as a result of the financial depression which followed the long years of war. In order to finance the various colonial expeditions, the governments had resorted to the practice of issuing paper money. By 1714, in Massachusetts alone there was £240,000 in paper currency in circulation, and silver had almost disappeared from the province. New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut were also deeply in debt. Inflation naturally led to a rise in prices and a higher cost of living. This was coupled with the expansion of the frontier and the demand

8 *Ibid.*, 73.
9 J. T. Adams, *Revolutionary New England, 1691-1776* (Boston, 1923), 9.

for more money. Debtors and promoters urged new issues of paper. The whole country was divided on the subject into bitterly hostile parties. On the one side were the governing and commercial groups, who were the creditors, and who were, for the most part, the conservative class of the older settlements. On the other side were the debtors, the lower classes of the seaboard and the newer men of the frontier towns. The struggle between these two groups continued throughout the first four decades of the eighteenth century, creating ill-will, bitterness, and resentment. By 1740 New England was on the verge of a social revolution. The climax was reached when five thousand supporters of the "Land Bank," that is, an issue of paper money based on land securities, were reported to be preparing to march upon Boston to secure their rights.[10] The catastrophe was avoided, but the strong feelings then aroused continued, and found expression in both political and ecclesiastical affairs. In the former, it made for revolution and freedom from the dominance of the English Parliament; in the latter, it led to revolt against the power and privilege of the Congregational churches and clergy, and to a re-emergence of enthusiasm.[11]

THE GREAT AWAKENING IN NEW ENGLAND

In September, 1740, New England was visited for the first time by the noted English revivalist, the Rev. George Whitefield. The land was ripe for his message. The way had been prepared by glowing accounts of his triumphs in Philadelphia and New York. Revivals at Northampton in 1734 and 1735, under the ministry of the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, and widely publicized by his *Narrative of Surprising Conversions* (1736), had also stimulated the popular imagination to a state of expectancy. In fact all the current trends of the century, the moral decline, the increased reliance upon external forms of religion, the toughening individualism and the democratic ideals of the common man prepared the way for an "awakening."

In Boston, the churches could not contain the crowds which thronged to hear Mr. Whitefield. Outdoor meetings were resorted to, and fifteen to twenty thousand persons assembled on Boston Common. Scenes reminiscent of Blackheath and the

10 A. M. Davis, *Currency and Banking in Massachusetts Bay* (N. Y., 1900), II, 153 ff.
11 J. C. Miller, "Religion, Finance and Democracy in Massachusetts," *The New England Quarterly* (1933), 29-58.

early field-preaching in England and Wales were repeated. "The power and presence of the Lord" descended. "Many now wept exceedingly and cried out under the word." Great numbers followed the preacher to his lodgings, where he again addressed them and met personally with inquirers. Sometimes the multitude was so deeply impressed and affected by his prayers that he was obliged to cease because of the loud outcries of convicted sinners.[12]

Although Whitefield was a Calvinist, and won the approval of some of the older New England ministers by declaring that man was "half a devil and half a beast," yet his preaching, on the whole, emphasized rather the gracious side of the divine nature. He was very conscious of his own "baseness," and, like so many of the enthusiasts, was at times morbidly introspective; yet, as he says, "Since Jesus Christ had shown such mercy to me, and did not withdraw his Holy Spirit from me, the chief of sinners, I was enabled the more feelingly to talk of his love."[13] Undoubtedly, it was his personal emphasis upon the grace and love of God which overwhelmed audiences who were accustomed only to hear dull reasoning concerning God's justice. Preaching at York, Maine, on October 2, 1740, he records, "I could speak little or no Terror, but almost all Consolation . . . . The Hearers looked plain and simple; and the Tears trickled apace down most of their Cheeks."[14] Add to this tender Gospel a personality and a manner of presentation unequalled in his century, and it is little wonder that congregations were "melted," and that persons of all ages had an experience of religion such as they had never dreamed possible before.

Between September 14, 1740, when he landed at Newport, and October 28, when he crossed into the Province of New York, Whitefield visited some twenty New England towns, preached one hundred and seventy-five times in public, besides exhorting frequently in private, and held interviews with hundreds of inquirers. Throughout the land he left an earnest body of "awakened" Christians, both ministers and laymen. These carried on the revival in their own parishes. At Natick, Wrentham, Bridgewater, Plymouth, Sutton, Taunton, Middleborough, Halifax,

12 George Whitefield, *A Continuation of . . . Journal* (London, 1741), 26-41. This is the so-called *Seventh Journal* which caused such offence in New England that the author later revised it.

13 *Ibid.*, 29.

14 *Ibid.*, 34.

Portsmouth, Gloucester, Reading, Newcastle, Westerly, Northampton, Lyme, Enfield, and other places, there were remarkable conversions and unprecedented experiences of religious fervor. Accounts of these were collected and published by Rev. Thomas Prince, Jr., in *The Christian History,* the first religious weekly in America, and these served to spread the fame of the revival. There was no doubt that New England religious life had undergone a remarkable transformation. The churches seemed to be returning once more to the early practice of the fathers of demanding a conscious religious experience of their members. The Half-Way Covenant appeared about to be swept away, and the churches restored to the status of holy communities of regenerate saints. "Conviction" or a vivid realization of personal sin and vileness, followed by "conversion," or an equally vivid realization of God's mercy and favor, the one accompanied by the utmost depression and fear, and the other by unrestrained joy and exaltation of spirit, became the accepted prerequisites of a Christian. All else, and especially every human effort such as reasoning and education, was secondary to this. Preaching took on more life and vigor. For half a century ministers had been tied to their manuscripts and notes; now there came a great release of extemporaneous effort. No doubt it was less polished and learned, but it had the virtue of being personal and live. Everywhere there sprang up a body of converted laymen, who shared the concern of their ministers for winning souls, and worked with them towards that end. This, more than any other single feature, was the significant result of the Great Awakening. It was the recognition of individualism and democracy in religion, a new attempt of the common man to take his place in the "universal priesthood of all believers."

The revival, however, was not all harmony and blessedness. Because of his strong belief in conversion, Whitefield had not hesitated to attack "unconverted ministers" in a public lecture in the Old South Church in Boston. "I am verily persuaded the generality of preachers talk of an unknown and unfelt Christ; and the reason why congregations have been so dead is, because they have dead men preaching to them. O that the Lord may quicken and revive them, for his own name's sake. For how can dead men beget living children?"[15]

Two weeks after Mr. Whitefield left New England, he sent

15 Whitefield, *Seventh Journal,* 38.

the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, in whose parish of New Brunswick, N. J., a spectacular awakening had already taken place, to follow up his mission. Tennent was a much coarser preacher than Whitefield. As one of his hearers wrote, "He appeared . . . like a *Boatswain* for a Ship, calling the Sailors to come to Prayer and be damned."[16] Even a warm friend of the revival like the Rev. Thomas Prince of Boston described his preaching as "terrible."

For the unconverted ministry, this stern revivalist had nothing but unmitigated scorn. In one sermon he called them, "Hirelings, Catterpillars, Letter-learned Pharisees, Men that have the Craft of Foxes and the Cruelty of Wolves, plaistered Hypocrites, Varlets, the Seed of the Serpent . . . dead Dogs that cannot bark . . . Daubers with untempered Mortar, Moral Negroes . . . Swarms of Locusts . . . Dead Drones."[17] "He seemed," wrote a contemporary, "to have a peculiar Quarrel with Reason, Learning and Morality, for he seldom finished a Sermon, without saying something against them."[18]

The result was that the spirit of censoriousness and criticism was introduced into the revival. New converts, exulting in the singular tokens of the Lord's favor which they had so recently experienced, looked with contempt upon the caution and conservatism of their ministers. Especially, as the lines of religious division became crossed with those of the social and economic struggle, tempers became more and more inflamed. Revival meetings or conventicles were set up in some places, and the old minister was left to preach ". . . almost to the bare Walls, whilst an ignorant and impudent Fellow, that perhaps has been remarkable for his former Villanies, and is liable to be cast into Prison by twenty Creditors, is mouthing it to Multitudes in the Neighboring Fields."[19]

Under such leadership the revival began to be marred, in many places, by emotional extravagances which shocked and alienated the more sober-thinking part of the community. Meetings were prolonged until midnight, while local or visiting en-

16 *A Letter from a Gentleman in Boston to Mr. George Wishart . . . Concerning the State of Religion in New England* (Edinburgh, 1742), 4.

17 Charles Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England* (Boston, 1743), 249.

18 *The State of Religion in New England, Since the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield's Arrival there, in a Letter from a Gentleman in New England to his Friend in Glasgow, etc.* Signed A. M. (Glasgow, 1742), 3.

19 *Ibid.*, 10.

thusiasts exhorted the people. Sometimes several would be talking or screaming at once, then by the flickering light of a few candles, the solemn Meeting-House would be shaken by groans, outcries, convulsive twitchings and stamping. One peculiar characteristic mentioned by many contemporaries, was "loud hearty laughing." "If a Number of converted meet together, they break out into a Laugh, that surprizes every one, not infected with their Distemper."[20] Epileptic fits, accompanied by visions and trances, were also common. "When they come out of their Trances they commonly tell a senseless story of Heaven and Hell, and whom and what they saw there."[21]

The climax of these wild extravagances was reached with the fanatical preaching of an itinerant minister, the Rev. James Davenport of Southold, Long Island. Dr. Chauncy of Boston has preserved the following account of his excesses.

> . . . . . At length he turned his discourse to others and with the utmost strength of his lungs, addressed himself to the congregation, under these and such like expressions—"You poor, unconverted Creatures, in the Seats, in the Pews, in the Galleries, I wonder you don't drop into Hell! It would not surprise me, I should not wonder at it, if I should see you drop down now, this minute into Hell. You Pharisees, Hypocrites, now, now, now, you are going to the Bottom of Hell. I wonder you don't drop by scores and hundreds." . . . . Then he came out of the Pulpit and stripped off his upper Garments and got into the Seats, and leapt up and down some time and clapt his hands and cried out in those words, "The War goes on, the Fight goes on, the Devil goes down"; and then betook himself to stamping and screaming most dreadfully.[22]

Little wonder, that under such powerful emotional assault, there were "swoonings away and falling to the Ground . . . . bitter Shrieking and Screamings: Convulsion-like Trembling and Agitations, Strugglings and Tumblings." When these excesses were accompanied by specific incitements to social levelism, and separation from the standing churches, there was an immediate response. The pent-up resentment and class feeling of both the creditor and debtor groups burst forth. Opposition to the revival, previously scattered and hesitant, became united and bitter in its denunciations. Soon the churches were divided into two great factions, the Newlights, or friends of the revival, and the Old Lights, who opposed it.

20 *Ibid.*, 8; cf., also Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts*, 240.
21 *The State of Religion*, 7.
22 Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts*, 98.

At the opening of the General Court of Connecticut, on May 13, 1742, the Rev. Isaac Stiles of North Haven "turned the artillery of heaven in a tremendous manner" upon the Newlights, urging his hearers to pray that "God would continually keep up the Wall and Hedge about his Vineyard, and not suffer the Boar out of the Wood to waste it, nor the Wild Beasts of the Field to devour it."[23] He called upon the legislators to "put a Stop to and prevent unscriptural Separation and Disorderly Practices."

A few days later, the Court passed the famous *Act for regulating Abuses and correcting Disorders in Ecclesiastical Affairs*,[24] which made it a penal offense for any layman to preach without a license, or any minister to conduct a meeting in another parish without the consent of the minister or church of that place. This procedure was possible in Connecticut because, by an act of the year 1708, the Congregational churches of the province had been established according to the agreements of the *Saybrook Platform*,[25] which provided that all cases of discipline which could not be settled within the local churches should be referred to a "Consociation" or standing council of churches, similar to a Presbytery. With these Consociations also lay the right to ordain. A provision was made for those "who soberly differ or dissent from the united churches hereby established," to worship in their own way.[26]

There can be no doubt that, as Benjamin Trumbull, the Connecticut historian, says, the Ecclesiastical Law of 1742 was "partial, inconsistent, and highly persecuting."[27] It was the work of a determined party within both church and government to preserve their own privileges. Justices of the peace and other civil officials who favored the Newlight doctrines were dismissed, and staunch supporters of the established order put in their places. There was a concerted attempt to cast "all the public odium and reproach possible" upon the revival.[28] James Davenport, who was preaching in the province at the time that the act

23 Isaac Stiles, *A Prospect of the City of Jerusalem in its Spiritual Beauty and Glory* (London, 1742), 25, 46.

24 *Colonial Records of Connecticut*, C. J. Hoadly and J. Trumbull eds. (Hartford, 1850-90), VIII, 454 ff.

25 M. L. Greene, *The Development of Religious Liberty in Connecticut* (Boston, 1905), Ch. IV.

26 *Connecticut Colonial Records*, V, 87.

27 Benjamin Trumbull, *A Complete History of Connecticut to the Year 1764* (New Haven, 1818), II, 166.

28 *Ibid.*, 165.

was passed, and who had denounced it as a high-handed infringement of the rights of conscience, and had urged his hearers to defy it, was ordered to be deported as a disturber of the peace, and as one "under the influence of enthusiastical impressions and impulses, and thereby disturbed in the rational faculties of his mind."[29]

It was in this tense situation that the *Separate* or *Strict Congregationalist* churches had their origin.[30]

THE SEPARATES

There were many friends of the revival, or Newlights, within the churches of Connecticut who were supporters of the constitutional establishment of the churches, and who as earnest and sober-minded Christians deplored the disorder against which the Ecclesiastical Law of 1742 was aimed. On the other hand, there were many who denied the right of the government to meddle in spiritual affairs and claimed the privilege of organizing their churches under the old Cambridge Platform of Congregationalism, rather than under the Saybrook Articles. "They believed the whole system of parish administration an usurpation of power wholly opposed to Scripture, and that each individual local church should call, settle and support its minister, and manage all its spiritual and secular concerns."[31] To such persons, in the words of Solomon Paine, one of the staunchest of the Newlight professors, "That law made for restraining such preaching and exhorting was made by the Devil in the lowest pit of Hell," and they would "be burnt to ashes before they would obey the Devil or any of his Crew."[32]

In May, 1743, the General Assembly gave the screws another turn. It was "resolved that those commonly called Presbyterians or Congregationalists should not take the benefit" of the Toleration Act of 1708, or as it was officially known, "the Act for the Relief of Sober Consciences." This meant that while Baptist, Episcopal, and Quaker organizations were still entitled to worship as they pleased, Congregationalists must

29 Tracy, *The Great Awakening*, 240.

30 S. L. Blake, *The Separates* (Boston, 1902), is the most thorough treatment of the subject.

31 E. D. Larned, *History of Windham County* (Worcester, 1847), I, 412. This history gives an excellent picture of the Separates in the county where they were most numerous.

32 *Ibid.*, I, 433.

attend and support the ministry of the constituted churches. Connecticut was now under a state establishment "as rigorous, exacting and unbending as that against which the Separatists of Scrooby protested."[33]

The more radical and zealous elements among the Newlights, therefore, found themselves on the horns of a grave dilemma. On the one hand, was their firm conviction that they could receive the Word of God only from the lips of a converted ministry, and that the state had no right to dictate in matters of conscience; on the other hand, there was the law forbidding them to listen to the exhorters in whom they believed, and compelling them to hear the standing minister, no matter what his spiritual state might be, and to contribute to his salary through the legal rates which were collected by the tax-collector. It is not surprising that, faced with such a choice, many refused to obey the law and maintained their right to speak and pray as they chose. Free religious meetings and conferences were continued, and in them fierce denunciations of the government were mingled with the spiritual exhortations of the enthusiasts. In a short time the spirit of Separatism had spread like wild-fire through the province.

In many cases there were little more than unorganized, excitable groups of Newlights who soon disbanded; but in at least thirty places actual churches were organized and continued to function for a longer or shorter period of time. These were situated for the most part in Windham and New London counties.[34] Because of the very nature of their origin, the membership of these Separate churchs was largely drawn from the lower classes of society, which were already dissatisfied with the existing order. Social unrest and religious enthusiasm thus joined hands. "Many lawless, turbulent and disorderly spirits were thus received into church-membership."[35] In the sincerity and simplicity of their belief in direct inspiration and in freedom of expression, the more solid leaders of the Separates provided no fixed standard of discipline for their adherents. Instead, every member was subject to the vagaries of his own brethren's divine intuitions. The result was anarchy and confusion. Scenes reminiscent of the wild fanaticism of the Anabaptists and Ran-

33 Blake, *The Separates*, 34.
34 *Ibid.*, 139-196, lists some twenty-seven churches.
35 Larned, *Windham County*, I, 474, *passim*; G. L. Walker, *Some Aspects*, 113.

ters were re-enacted, and many of the doctrines of the sectaries besides that of religious freedom were revived. Apocalyptical expectations filled the air. The sacraments and all outward forms and duties were declared to be mere "legal bondage." Even marriage seems to have been attacked and nullified in some cases. It is probable that more than one earnest and devout Separatist was led to exclaim, as did Elizabeth Chandler of Woodstock, "I would not write a line counter to ye work of God if I knew where it was, but I have got so bewildered and sunk that I can't tell where the work of God is."[36]

To these internal troubles of the Separates were added the sore trials produced by the determination of both the ecclesiastical and civil authorities to "blow out the New Light." Never in American history has there been such severe and relentless persecution for conscience sake. As far as possible, the rights of citizenship were taken from them. They were denied seats in the General Assembly. Baptisms and marriages performed by their ordained ministers were declared illegal. Their attempt to found a college to train their young men for the ministry was thwarted by an act of the General Court,[37] and their sons who were studying at Yale College were in two cases expelled. Even the courts of law were deaf to their appeals for justice. Because they denied the right of the state to tax them for the support of ministers of whom they did not approve, and refused to pay such dues, their property was confiscated and sold at auction. When goods failed, persons were seized and thrown into prison, where sometimes they found their exhorters and itinerant preachers already languishing. Miss Larned states that at Windham a new story had to be added to the county jail to accommodate the large number of Separates imprisoned there.[38]

Doctrinally, the Newlight or Separate churches were strictly Calvinist, adhering to the Trinitarian faith and the Westminster Confession. The movement was never marked by any theological innovations greater than a belief that a spiritual meaning lies hidden behind the letter of the Scriptures, "which no man can come to the knowledge of, but by the special revelation or opening of the spirit of God."[39] Their errors were,

36 *Ibid.*, I, 475.
37 *Connecticut Colonial Records, VIII,* 501; Greene, *Religious Liberty,* 255.
38 Larned, *Windham County,* I, 548.
39 Trumbull, *History of Connecticut,* II, 193.

rather, in the realm of discipline and order. They were inclined, as has been already noted, to depend upon impulses and impressions, and to make religion consist in outcries, "in bodily agitations, in great fear and joys, in zeal and talk." Therefore, they were convinced that if they did not *feel* a minister's preaching, he must be unconverted, and hence unfit to occupy a pulpit. They also chose their own pastors by the same intuitive method. It was an important part of their witness against the Saybrook Regulations that pastors should be ordained, not by a consociation but by a local church. When Paul Park was ordained over the Separate Church at Preston, on July 15, 1747, "it was enjoined upon him, by no means to study or premeditate what he should say in public, but to speak as the Spirit should give him utterance."[40]

As a result of this prejudice against human learning, Separatist utterances came to be clothed in a strange apocalyptic imagery, not unlike that used by the English sectaries of the Commonwealth period. On one occasion, at least, works by such writers as Flavel, Henry, Increase Mather, Colman, and Chauncy were consigned to the flames along with such trumpery as "Wigs, Cloaks . . . Hoods, Gowns, Rings, Jewels and Necklaces," and "a Pair of Plush Breeches," belonging to the Rev. James Davenport.[41] The result of this policy was that the movement fell more and more into the hands of ignorant and fanatical men. "Dreams and visions supplied the place of dictionary and commentary."[42]

Probably, however the most fatal error of the Separates was the assumption that they possessed "the Key of Knowledge," whereby they could distinguish a Christian from an unbeliever as certainly and as clearly "as a sheep may be known from a dog."[43] Only those with whom "they held communion in the inward actings of their own souls" were true believers. All others were hypocrites and the servants of Antichrist. This stimulated an attitude of suspicion and habitual fault-finding among the brethren, and it is to this, more than any other single cause, that historians of the movement have attributed its decline.

40 Blake, *The Separates*, 106.

41 Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts*, 221ff. This remarkable piece of fanaticism occurred in New London in March, 1743, under the leadership of James Davenport. The clothes and jewelry were not burned. See also Blake, *The Separates*, 101.

42 Larned, *Windham County*, I, 469.

43 *Ibid.*, I, 469; Blake, *The Separates*, 205-206.

"Every man was at the mercy of the 'inward feelings' of his neighbor's soul."[44] As a result of this system of psychic espionage, the Separate churches were torn by internal strife. One church had, within three years of its formation, suspended or cut off more than one-third of its membership on various charges.[45]

Another cause of disintegration was the spread of Baptist doctrines among the Separates. The two sects had much in common. Both believed in a pure church of regenerated members, in the exercise of spiritual gifts, and in a converted ministry. Both were opposed to a state church and compulsory rate-paying. The one essential point of difference was the question of the proper mode and subjects of baptism. For a time there was a considerable amount of co-operation and cordiality among them. Exhorters and itinerant preachers visited both groups, and Baptist ministers assisted at Separate ordinations.[46] The importance placed by that generation upon scriptural authority for every particular of church order, however, soon led to strife. Many Baptists were unwilling to commune with "unbaptized" persons. To the Separates this was elevating an outward form above the inner light of the spirit. Two councils were held in an attempt to reach some basis of agreement, and to unite the Baptist and Separate churches in some kind of fellowship. Twenty-seven churches were represented at the first council, held at Exeter, R. I., May 23, 1753. Open communion was formally adopted and it was agreed "That all the churches of this body are one church; that the words *dip* and *sprinkle* shall cease, and *baptize* be only used."[47] The local churches, however, refused to accept this agreement. The attempt at "mixed communion" led only to further controversy. On May 29, 1754, a second council was held at Stonington, Connecticut. Elders and messengers from twenty-four churches in Connecticut, eight in Massachusetts, and seven in Rhode Island, assembled "to hear the controversy between Baptists and Congregationalists." But union proved to be impossible.[48] Many Separates, convinced of

44 Larned, *Windham County*, I, 470.

45 *Ibid.*, I, 470. The church in question was Canterbury, Conn.

46 *Ibid.*, I, 436; Tracy, *The Great Awakening*, 323; Blake, *The Separates*, 86. One of the Baptists who assisted in ordaining Separates was Elder Ebenezer Moulton who later emigrated to Nova Scotia.

47 Larned, *Windham County*, I, 476.

48 Isaac Backus, *Church History of New England, From 1620-1804, etc.* (Philadelphia, 1844), 177-178.

the scriptural soundness of immersion, left their churches; others became Baptists in a body. The exemption from legal disabilities enjoyed by the Baptists was also a strong inducement to change. This gave rise to the accusation that the Separates "had themselves dipped to wash away their taxes."[49] Whatever the motive may have been, it is generally recognized that the Baptist denomination profited greatly by the "Great Schism" in Connecticut.

Fighting an unequal battle against the constituted authorities; torn asunder by internal strife and controversy; suffering from lack of trained leadership and from the ignorance and impulsiveness of its members, the Separate movement in Connecticut rapidly burned itself out. In 1756 a committee representing twenty churches carried an appeal to England, praying "for the benefit of the Toleration Act."[50] The result was a sharp letter of reprimand to the colonial authorities from the chairman of the committee of Dissenting Deputies, expressing amazement that *"Dissenters* from the *Church Establishment of Connecticut* should be denied the privileges granted to those in *Great Britain,"* and hinting that it might seriously affect the colonial Charter. Although the persecuting laws were not repealed until after the Revolution, from 1756 on they ceased to be rigidly enforced. The relief, however, came too late to save the Separates. Disintegration had already gone too far. With "the moral camp-distemper" which accompanied the long French and Indian Wars, a new period of religious decline set in. Whole areas which had been "burned over" by the Newlight fires became spiritually "waste places." In 1758 the Rev. Benjamin Throop, preaching the annual Election Sermon, cried out in language reminiscent of the fathers who fifty years before had bemoaned the Puritan decline, "There is an awful Decay of Religion. . . . the Fear of God is amazingly cast off this Day."[51] Modern authorities are agreed that the Great Awakening in New England was followed by a period of religious indifference.[52]

In Massachusetts, there were fewer separations, since there the Congregational churches were not under the Saybrook Plat-

49 J. C. Meyer, *Church and State in Massachusetts* (Cleveland, 1930), 36.

50 One of the commissioners was Bliss Willoughby who later acted as land agent in Nova Scotia for the Connecticut emigrants. Larned, *Windham County,* I, 483; Blake, *The Separates,* 123ff.

51 Quoted in G. L. Walker, *Some Aspects,* 112.

52 Meyer, *Church and State,* 32; Blake, *The Separates,* 56; G. L. Walker, *Some Aspects,* 112.

form, and in many cases the Newlights were a majority in the local church.[53] Whitefield paid a second visit to the province in 1744, but the revival had already spent its force, and his coming did little more than add fuel to the fires of religious controversy which were raging throughout the land. Indeed, the Great Awakening in Massachusetts appears to have faded out in a battle of pamphlets and conflicting testimonies among the clergy, and a constant struggle with the tax-collector among the common people.

By the famous Five Mile Acts of 1727-28, Baptists, Quakers, and Episcopalians had been granted exemption from taxation for the support of the Congregational ministry, providing they lived within five miles of their own places of worship.[54] Separates, however, were not included in these measures of relief; hence, in Massachusetts also there were fines and imprisonment for failure to pay ministerial rates.

> They stripped the shelves of pewter, of such as had it; and of other that had not they took away skillets, kettles, pots and warming pans. Others they deprived of the means they got their bread with, viz., workman's tools, and spinning wheels. They drove away geese and swine from the doors of some others; from some that had cows; from some that had but one they took that away . . . . Some they thrust into jail, where they had long and tedious imprisonment.[55]

In 1753 a new law was enacted, compelling Quakers and Anabaptists to produce annually a certificate, signed by a minister and two members of their church, to prove that they were church members.[56] As the Separates were for the most part among the poorer people in the towns, they were practically forced to be re-baptized in order to escape the burden of supporting two churches.

A further cause of unrest was a law passed in 1760, which provided that in order to qualify as a recognized minister of a parish, a man must have academic or college training, or be recommended by the majority of ministers in the county.[57] This requirement was almost impossible of fulfillment by illiterate

53 The best known Separate churches in Massachusetts were, Attleboro, Rheoboth, Middleboro, Bridgewater, Grafton, Sunderland, Norton, Wrentham, Charlestown, and Sturbridge. G. L. Walker, *Some Aspects*, 115.

54 *The Acts and Resolves, Private and Public, of the Province of Massachusetts Bay* (Boston, 1881), II, 459 ff.

55 Isaac Backus, *A History of New England*, D. Weston ed. (Newton, 1871), II, 94 ff.

56 *Acts and Resolves*, III, 664.

57 *Ibid.*, IV, xxiv, 288.

Baptists and Newlights, and it led to prolonged litigation and smouldering resentment. In fact, the revival in Massachusetts seemed to end in the law-courts.

SUMMARY

It is amid this background of religious dissent and persecution, of religious revival and decline, in a society in which the desire for social equality had combined with a most remarkable outburst of ideas of religious liberty, that one must seek the origins of those Newlights who so deeply troubled the Bishop and Anglican clergy of Nova Scotia at the close of the eighteenth century. Quite evidently the flame that burned in the souls of the Anabaptists, Seekers, and the Family of Love had once again crossed the sea and burst forth anew in the wilderness. Smothered and neglected in New England, the New Light blazed again on the Canadian frontier.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PRE-LOYALISTS

"A pretty considerable share of Yankee blood in them too, I tell you; the old stock comes from New England, and the breed is tolerably pure yet, near about one half applesauce, and tother half molasses, all except to the eastward where there is a cross of Scotch."

Sam Slick

THE CHARTER OF NOVA SCOTIA

Since its capture by colonial troops under Colonel Nicholson in 1710, Nova Scotia had been a possible field for New England expansion.[1] Until the founding of Halifax, however, the possibility remained little more than a dream, set down on paper by Governor Shirley of Massachusetts and pigeonholed in London.[2] So long as the Acadians occupied the best farmlands, and their kinsmen held the great French stronghold of Louisbourg, emigration to Nova Scotia was out of the question. A rapid succession of events in the years following 1749 changed this situation. Halifax supplied the British with a strong naval and military base to offset Louisbourg and quickly became the headquarters of a prosperous group of New England merchants. Following the outbreak of war in 1755 the Acadian neutrals were deported from the province and their farms left vacant.[3] Three years later Louisbourg fell, thus rendering secure British supremacy in the whole Atlantic region. The way was at last clear for the planting of settlements.

On October 12, 1758, Governor Charles Lawrence issued a proclamation describing in rosy terms the rich farm lands in Nova Scotia. More than two hundred thousand acres of interval and upland were offered to settlers on the most generous terms.[4]

1 J. B. Brebner, *New England's Outpost* (N. Y., 1927), is the best treatment of this period. Beamish Murdoch, *A History of Nova Scotia*, 3 vols. (Halifax, 1865), is the standard history of the province.

2 C. H. Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley, 1731-1760* (N. Y., 1912), I, 336 ff.

3 The official papers relating to the Acadians are published in *Selections from the Public Documents of Nova Scotia*, T. B. Atkins, ed. (Halifax, 1869).

4 *Boston News Letter*, Nov. 2, 1758. The proclamation is printed in W. O. Raymond, *Alexander McNutt and the Pre-Loyalist Settlements of Nova Scotia* (St. John, 1921), 104.

Such a prospect was bound to arouse considerable interest among the land-hungry and restless population of New England, where the social discontent arising from inflation, debt and religious persecution had not been lessened by the war. The response to the proclamation, however, was cautious. Inquiries were made concerning the political and religious situation in the province. The prospective settlers were determined that in the new land they would not be shackled by the inequalities and abuses of their homelands.

The religious question especially seemed to require clarification. Since the founding of Halifax the Church of England had occupied a specially privileged position in Nova Scotia. Churches received government aid, and clergymen were appointed to chaplaincies and received other signs of favor. Education in the province was in the hands of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, an organization which was especially distrusted in New England.[5] Earlier in 1758, the first representative Assembly of Nova Scotia had passed *an Act for the establishment of religious public Worship in this Province, and for the Suppressing of Popery.*[6] By it, "the sacred rites and ceremonies of divine worship, according to the liturgy of the Church established by the laws of England" were declared "to be deemed the fixed form of worship amongst us, and the place wherein such liturgy shall be used, shall be respected and known by the name of the Church of England as by law established." All clergymen of the Church must be licensed by the Bishop of London, and "publickly declare their assent and consent to the book of common prayer, and shall subscribe to be conformable to the Orders and constitutions of the Church of England, and the laws there established." The governor of the province was also given power to induct qualified clergymen "into any parish that shall make presentation of him," and to "suspend and silence" any other person, presenting himself as a minister of the church, "who presumed to teach or preach publickly or privately."

Although these laws were intended only for the proper regulation of the Church of England, and although the Assembly

5 For full treatment of this subject see, A. L. Cross, *The Anglican Episcopate and the American Colonies* (N. Y., 1902).

6 *The Perpetual Acts of the General Assemblies of His Majesty's Province of Nova Scotia,* Revised 1783 (Halifax, 1784), 32 Geo. II, Cap. V, 7.

took care to insert a clause in the act providing for the liberty of conscience and freedom of worship for Protestant Dissenters,[7] nevertheless, there was enough of the coercive in the law to arouse the suspicion of the New Englanders. Might not an Episcopal clergyman be installed in a parish where there was no Dissenting meeting-house, and might not Dissenters then be compelled by law to support him? Were not these laws respecting unlicensed teachers and preachers similar to those aimed at the itinerants and exhorters in Connecticut and Massachusetts?

Another Act of the first Provincial Assembly, if they knew of it, might also have given cause for alarm in New England. Marriage by license, without the publication of banns, was restricted to clergymen of the Church of England, and could not be performed by Dissenting ministers. This disability meant that both Congregational and Presbyterian ministers were unequal, in the eyes of the law, to the clergy of the established church.[8]

As a result of the hesitancy of New Englanders to take up lands in Nova Scotia, Governor Lawrence was led to issue a second proclamation on January 11, 1759. This document contained the solemn assurances of the government upon the subject of civil and religious liberties within the province, which early won for it the title "The Charter of Nova Scotia."[9] Regarding religion, the proclamation declared:

> . . . full liberty of conscience, both of His Majesty's royal instructions and a late act of the General Assembly of this Province, is secured to persons of all persuasions, Papists excepted, as more fully appears from the following extract of the said act, viz: "Protestants dissenting from the Church of England, whether they be Calvinists, Lutherans, Quakers, or under what denomination soever, shall have free liberty of conscience, and may erect and build Meeting Houses for public worship, and may choose

7 32 Geo. II, Cap. V, ii. The remaining sections of the act contain very stringent laws against "popish priests," providing "perpetual imprisonment" for any offenders found within the province after Mar. 25, 1759, and a fine of £50 and the pillory for any person harboring, relieving, concealing or entertaining such a priest. These harsh enactments were omitted from the revised laws of 1783, but Test Oaths were required of all Catholics until 1827. The Anglican Church was not disestablished until 1851.

8 32 Geo. II, Cap. XVII. This discriminating law remained in force until 1832 when it was finally removed after a long and bitter struggle. Cf., Murdoch, *History of Nova Scotia*, III, 411 ff., 441.

9 T. C. Haliburton, *An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia* (Halifax 1829), I, 220. A copy of the original proclamation may be seen in the John Carter Brown Library, Providence, R. I. It also appeared in *Boston News-Letter*, Feb. 15, 1759.

and elect Ministers for the carrying on of Divine Service and administration of the Sacrament, according to their several opinions, and all contracts made between their Ministers and Congregations for the support of their Ministry are hereby declared valid, and shall have their full force and effect according to the tenor and conditions thereof, and all such Dissenters shall be excused from any rates or taxes to be made or levied for the support of the Established Church of England."

THE SETTLERS

The response to the second proclamation was immediate. Agents representing some hundreds of associated families visited the province and filed their claims in the Land Office. It has been estimated that as many as 1,800 settlers reached the province before the close of the year 1760.[10] Six years later the first provincial census gave the total population as 13,374, of whom 6,913 were "Americans."[11] As this latter number would include those born in Nova Scotia it is safe to estimate that between five and six thousand immigrants came to Nova Scotia from New England during these few years.

This northeastward movement of population from the older tide-water colonies has scarcely been recognized by American historians, yet it is obviously a part of the great westward expansion which plays so important a part in American history.[12] During the last three years of the Seven Years' War, when the western frontier was closed because of hostile French and Indians, Nova Scotia provided a welcome outlet for the frontier spirit. After the Peace of Paris and the setting up of the famous "western line" prohibiting settlement west of the Appalachians, emigration to the Atlantic province was deliberately fostered and encouraged. Between 1763 and 1768 there was a fever of land grabbing, and land companies as far away as Philadelphia received huge grants of territory in Nova Scotia. Most of these remained uninhabited and unimproved and only served to separate and limit the existing settlements. The Philadephia Plantation at Pictou and similar small groups of Pennsylvania Dutchmen along the Petitcodiac River were almost the only tangible results of the great land boom.[13]

10 J. B. Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia* (New York, 1937), 33.

11 *Ibid.*, 93 n., points out that this is an incomplete return and that the number should be at least 16,837.

12 The subject has been excellently treated by M. L. Hansen and J. B. Brebner, *The Mingling of the Canadian and American People* (New Haven, 1940), 20-42.

13 See W. O. Sawtelle, "Acadia: The Pre-Loyalist Migration and the Philadelphia Plantation," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, LI (1927), 244.

With the opening of the Ohio country in 1768, immigration from American colonies practically ceased, and Nova Scotia remained a back-water untouched by the main currents of American migration until the flood-tide of Loyalist refugees burst in upon it at the close of the Revolutionary War. Immigration from the other side of the Atlantic, however, continued. Soon after the founding of Halifax, some three thousand "Foreign Protestants" had been introduced from the Rhineland. The greater number of them were settled at Lunenburg. During the land-boom of 1764, Colonel Alexander McNutt, a spectacular promoter of land companies, brought some two thousand Ulstermen to the province. Between 1772 and 1775 more than a thousand prosperous Yorkshire farmers were settled on the Isthmus of Chignecto, and in 1773 the ship *Hector* landed thirty-three destitute Scottish Highlanders at Pictou, the beginning of the Highland migration to eastern Nova Scotia, which reached its height only at the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars.[14]

These various groups of settlers, New Englanders, Ulstermen, Germans, both Continental and Colonial, Yorkshiremen, and Scottish Highlanders added to the English population which came to the province at the founding of Halifax, and the remnants of the Acadians form the main racial strands of pre-Revolutionary and pre-Loyalist Nova Scotia. Of these, the first was by far the most numerous and influential group.[15]

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, 1760-1775

The movement from New England to Nova Scotia was social and not individualistic. Associations of families, and not lone pioneers, made the plans, sent their representatives to view the lands, and arrange terms with the government. If they were fortunate, they moved together on transports provided by the Nova Scotian authorities; otherwise they chartered their own vessels for the passage from one colony to the other. When they reached their new township they met together, chose their own officers, and laid out their own lands and town-plot. This was all done in accordance with old New England practice.[16]

14 George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou* (Montreal, 1877), 55ff.

15 It is important to note that after 1768 there was actually a movement of population back to New England due to the economic depression in Nova Scotia and the restlessness caused by the political situation in the older colonies. Cf., Hansen and Brebner, *The Mingling*, 36-37.

16 Cf., R. H. Akagi, *The Town Proprietors of the New England Colonies* (Philadelphia, 1924), esp. ch. I, III, and IV.

The *Diary* of Henry Evans of Sudbury, Mass.,[1] gives an interesting contemporary picture of the movement in progress.

1760

April 1, Preparing to go to Halifax to waite on his Excellency governor Lawrence and the Council, as being appointed Agent for the township of Annapolis Royal. . . .

April 16, waited on the Governor and was Received kindly. Shewing the Petition and asking some more favours—most of which I Gott granted.

April 17, Obtained the order for two vessels and other Things . . . I requesting it in writing for the Satisfaction of my Constituents. . . .

May 5, Chartered the schooner *Charming Molly*, Captain Grow.

May 6, went to Framingham—meeting of Proprietors. . .

July 9, (Annapolis ?) Had a meeting of the Proprietors—Entered on the Public Service Being Chosen one of the Committee for Laying out Lands, and town Committee & Treasurer of the Town. . . .

Aug. 27, Finished laying out Lotts for the first Settlers.

Oct. 6, Began to lay out Lotts for the second Settlers. . .

Nov. 14, Began my house . . . .[17]

The term "proprietor" is very familiar in New England history. The proprietors were the owners of the land and were responsible collectively for the improvement of the new plantation. "More specifically they were responsible for inducing and enlisting settlers and new comers, for locating home lots and dwelling houses, for building highways and streets, for subdividing the adjacent arable land, and subjecting the meadow and forest, for a time at least to a common management."[18] Records of proprietors' meetings at Falmouth, Cornwallis, and Horton show that the Nova Scotia immigrants followed the New England custom.[19]

At the first meeting of the Falmouth proprietors, on June 10, 1760, Shubael Dimock, a former deacon of the Separate Church in Mansfield, Connecticut, was elected Moderator, and, according to custom, a standing-committee of three was appointed to manage the prudential affairs of the community. This committee laid out the lands as they had been laid out for over a century in New England: two hundred acres for a common, sixty acres for a town-site and certain tracts for meeting-house, cemetery, school, and for the first resident minister. Each man

17 Printed in W. A. Calnek and W. A. Savary, *History of the County of Annapolis* (Toronto 1897), 148-151.

18 Akagi, *Town Proprietors*, 3.

19 R. G. Huling, "The Rhode Island Emigration of Nova Scotia," *The Narragansett Historical Register*, VII (1889), 104 ff.; A. W. H. Eaton, *The History of Kings County* (Salem, 1910), 78-82.

had half an acre of the town-lot, six acres of dykeland, ten acres of marsh, a farm-lot (upland) varying in size according to the quality of the soil, and two wood-lots, "one of these was from 100 to 200 acres in size and was quite accessible, the other contained about 400 acres and might be located in the back-country wherever the shareholder could find an unappropriated piece of land." Land claimed in this last way was said to have been "pitched" and this odd term was currently used in both Nova Scotia and New England.[20]

In one very important respect, however, the Nova Scotian proprietors differed from those in New England. The number of lots or shares in each township was determined by the government and not by the proprietors' meeting, and each proprietor received only his exact share; the lands remaining in the township then still remained in the hands of the Crown, and were granted to new proprietors by the Lands Office at Halifax and not by the local proprietors' meeting. In this way one of the great causes of friction and social discontent in the older colonies was eliminated, for there the proprietors controlled the common or undivided land, and the "non-commoners" or ordinary townsmen could not share in it. Thus there had grown up a landed oligarchy or privileged class, who frequently did not live on the land themselves, but controlled its division and caused much ill-feeling among their tenants and the small land owners who lived on the soil and did the work but were denied the privileges of proprietorship. This inequality led to controversy and revolt. The masses of freemen instinctively resented the social pretensions of the "commoners." The latter, on the other hand, were drawn together both by common interests and by marriage ties, and resisted the demands of the "non-commoners" for equal rights. It is not insignificant that when the revolt against the British Parliament broke out, it was largely the landed proprietors who constituted the loyalists of New England and that their lands were confiscated on that ground.[21]

Nova Scotia profited by the experience of the older colonies, and doubtless one of the attractions of the new country was the fact that the old abuses of the proprietor system no longer existed there. Considerable speculation has taken place on the

20 Cf., *Ibid.*, 81, and Akagi, *Town Proprietors*, 108.
21 *Ibid.*, 299.

subject of the social background of the Pre-Loyalist planters.[22] Undoubtedly there were some of the proprietor class among them. Lawrence reported in 1760 that the first settlers at Liverpool owned their own live-stock and thirteen fishing schooners, as well as three saw-mills which they brought with them from New England. Later in the same year Belcher informed the Lords of Trade that "Many of the inhabitants are rich and in good circumstances."[23] At the same time, however, he intimated that "As to the poorer sort there is provision made for them until the month of August." A glance at the passenger list of the *Charming Molly* in Henry Evan's *Diary* will show that only ten out of the thirty-one proprietors of Annapolis Royal brought any stock with them, and that these on the average had only one yoke of oxen and one or two cows each.[24] Nor should it be forgotten that in 1766 there was a remonstrance from the principal inhabitants of Halifax to the Lords of Trade because "all the scum of the Colonies" was being admitted to the province, which they said had been "inundated with persons who are not only useless but burdensome," and that the passage money of "persons from gaols, hospitals and work-houses" was actually being paid by the other colonial governments.[25] This, of course, was during the period of the land-boom and probably does not apply to the free associations of 1760-62; nevertheless it is unlikely that very many of the old, privileged proprietor class migrated to Nova Scotia. There is ample evidence, however, to show that there were among the pioneers self-reliant and socially assured leaders who, given the advantages of a new land, soon forged ahead and achieved prosperity and independence for themselves.[26]

22 Mackinnon, *Settlements and Church in Nova Scotia, 1749-1776* (Montreal, 1930), 42; Brebner, *Neutral Yankees*, 58.

23 *Canadian Archives*, 1894, 221; 223.

24 Calneck and Savary, *County of Annapolis*, 151. The wealthiest passenger was Deacon John Whitman, who, in addition to two oxen, brought with him ten sheep, one "saow bigg with piggs," four calves, and six lambs. Only two horses were brought by these people.

25 *Canadian Archives*, 1894, 270. Compare with the argument accompanying a letter to James Fulton from Halifax, Dec. 12, 1773, that emigration from the older colonies to Nova Scotia would provide a market for British goods, "and it would also be a certain means of drawing off many people from the Seaport Towns, and other parts in those Colonies, who now have no land to work on, or are in any employment, but that are running into Mobs and Cabals. . . ." Printed in H. A. Innis, *Select Documents in Canadian Economic History, 1497-1783* (Toronto, 1929), 179.

26 An interesting sidelight on the relations of commoners and non-commoners is found in Haliburton's *Nova Scotia*, I, 236. "Many of the principal proprietors

During the first few years, like all pioneers, the Pre-Loyalists had to face severe hardships. In addition to the usual labor of building homes and fencing lands, they had the misfortune to lose most of their first crop through late planting, summer droughts, and early frosts. In Annapolis County the settlers were reduced to eating the grain they had reserved for seed. In 1762 and 1763 their success was little better; there were "Droughts and Vermin," and during the winter some were "famished." Even the fishing communities were in great distress during the winter months "'til the Fish struck in." A *Memorandum* prepared by the Chief-Surveyor and the Provincial Secretary on October, 1763, gives a discouraging picture of the new settlements and estimates that it will take three thousand bushels of corn to carry the people through the coming winter.[27] This situation no doubt accounts in part for the failure of the townships to reach the full quota of settlers envisaged by Governor Charles Lawrence.

Labor, of course, was almost unobtainable in a new country. One observer remarked, "A Number of Cultivators have sunk their Capital; while a Number of their Labourers and Servants have raised themselves upon their ruin and at this Day you cannot get Men to work Dyking or Draining under a Dollar per Day. . . "[28] Such wages were prohibitive. In 1774, two Yorkshire farmers, John Robinson and Thomas Rispin, visited Nova Scotia to examine the land with a view to settling. In their written account of their journey they mention the fact that

of real estate (in New England) endeavored to retard and prevent the departure of people, by contriving to force them into levies that were making for the public service." The reason for this unwillingness to see the people go was partly the fact that with the departure of so many people, land values had declined and the proprietors were faced with ruin. Ezra Stiles wrotes on Feb. 3, 1760, that lands at Voluntown, Conn., had dropped in value from £30 an acre to £15, and that "Many are selling their land in order to remove." At East Haddam, land values decreased 25% and at Stafford, 50%. In 1763, Dr. Stiles wrote, "Dr. Woodbr. judges the people of Stonington, Groton, &c., in debt all their Stock & half their Land. Lands fell half in two years." F. B. Dexter, *Extracts from the Itineraries and Other Miscellanies of Ezra Stiles*, 51, 50, 81, 188. Many of the Nova Scotia settlers came from these areas. To them, the generous offers of the government and the famous *Debtor's Act*, whereby debts contracted in other colonies could not be collected by law in Nova Scotia, must have appeared most attractive. Cf., *Canadian Archives*, 1894, 250.

27 Charles Morris and Richard Bulkeley, *State and Condition of the Province of Nova Scotia, 1763.* Printed in Report of the Board of Trustees of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia (1933), 21-26.

28 "Observations on the Progress of Agriculture in Nova Scotia," (no date but c. 1765), *ibid.*, 194.

money was so scarce among the population of the province that trade was carried on chiefly by barter.[29]

These factors, together with the isolation of the settlements and the general economic depression which engulfed the province after 1768, tended to discourage and demoralize the settlers. Authorities are fairly well agreed that they became careless and indifferent. Robinson and Rispin summed up their own conclusions in these words:

> Nothing can be said in favour of the inhabitants, as to their management in farming. They neither discover judgment or industry. Such of the New Englanders, into whose manners and characters we particularly inspected, appeared to us to be lazy, indolent people. In general they continue in bed till seven or eight o'clock in the morning; and the first thing they do, after quitting it, is to get a glass of rum, after which they prepare for breakfast, before they go out to work, and return to dinner by eleven. They go out again about two, and at four return to tea. Sometimes they work an hour or two after, and then return home, both masters and their servants, amongst whom their seems to be no distinction; and you scarce can know one from the other. They are all Misters and Sirs, and their maidens all Misses; so that you never hear a Christian name mentioned. They usually all eat together at one table, except amongst a few of the wealthier sort. . . .[30]

This striking picture of frontier life, by observers who had no reason to be prejudiced against the Pre-Loyalists, would lead one to conclude that the meagerness and penury of their existence had sapped whatever ambitions these people may have had, leaving them with only an exaggerated opinion of their own importance and independence.[31]

The neatly planned towns, with their regularly laid out streets and village greens, did not materialize. Instead, the shortest path across the fields of an absentee owner, or of a deserted homestead, connected the irregularly scattered dwellings of the village.

Because of direct government interference, the associations of proprietors in Nova Scotia never developed into the influential town-meetings which were so familiar in New England. As early as 1761, on the recommendation of Governor Belcher, the Lords of Trade disallowed an "Act enabling proprietors to divide

29 John Robinson and Thomas Rispin, *A Journey Through Nova Scotia* (York 1774), 30. Copies of this rare work are in Harvard and J. C. Brown libraries.

30. In J. C. Brown libraries.

31 Judge T. C. Haliburton, the Nova Scotian humorist of the early nineteenth century, never ceased to ridicule the backwardness and conceit of his countrymen; cf., *The Clockmaker, or the Sayings of Sam Slick of Slickville* (1836).

lands held in common," which had been passed by the first Provincial Assembly.[32] This, no doubt, was a wise move and prevented those abuses of the proprietor system which were current in New England. Belcher's motive, however, was to extend the authority of the central government over the townships. It is unnecessary here to enter into the story of the struggle between the governor and the group of Halifax merchants who largely dominated the political and financial affairs of the province. Actually there was a tremendous difference between the life of the capital and that of the outsettlements, and naturally official history has been more concerned with the former. The fate of the Nova Scotian town-meetings was bound up with the intrigues of the Halifax circle. Instead of permitting the freeholders to elect their own officers, it was arranged that the grand juries of the four principal counties should nominate candidates for the local offices and then the local Justices of the Peace choose from among the nominees the men who should finally be appointed. In this way the offices of the townships were kept in the hands of the friends of the government, or at least of that group of enterprising men who held key positions in the Council. About the only power left to the town meetings was the care of the poor.[33] The change did not pass without protest, but on the whole the towns were too weak to defend "the rights and liberties of Englishmen." In 1770 the town meeting of Truro objected to the officers chosen to govern it. Liverpool and other towns also made complaints, but a warning that the Attorney-General had been instructed to prosecute persons who called "Town Meetings for Debating and Resolving on Several Questions Relating to the Laws and Government of this Province," seemed to have a quieting effect.[34] The new settlements were too scattered to unite in any effort to preserve their liberties, and too poor to carry on the struggle. Those who might have been their leaders already held offices under the centralized system and shared in its profits. It was this lack of leadership, organization, and experience, as well as their remoteness and poverty, which to a great extent determined Nova Scotia's attitude during the War of Independence. There can be

32 *Canadian Archives*, 1894, 227.
33 D. C. Harvey, "The Struggle for the New England Form of Township Government in Nova Scotia," *Canadian Historical Association Report* (1933), 15-22.
34 Murdoch, *Nova Scotia, II*, 493.

little doubt that Governor Belcher's policy "prevented the formation of some twenty little republics in western Nova Scotia, and it enabled the central government to establish communications with the townships and to retain a check upon the activities.[35] It also accelerated the moral and social decline which has already been observed.

There is very little evidence, however, of gross immorality among the Pre-Loyalists. The cases of discipline recorded in the church records are seldom concerned with scandalous sins. Drunkenness seems to have been the most prevalent evil.[36] Provincial statutes, comparable to the "Blue Laws" of New England, provided severe sentence for all breaches of the criminal code, and for such offenses as profanity, or absence from church. Church wardens were ordered to walk the streets during the time of divine worship to discover the delinquents.[37]

Slavery was practiced by those who could afford it. *The Nova Scotia Gazette* from time to time carried advertisements such as the following:

Ran Away

On Monday the 10th., of June last, between the hours of 9 and 10 at night, a negro woman named *Florimell,* she had on when she went away, a red poppin Gown, a blue baize outside Petticoat, and a pair of Men's Shoes, she commonly wears a handkerchief around her Head, has Scars on her Face, speaks broken English, and is not very black , , , 1 Guinea Rwd. and all charges for their trouble.[38]

In addition to household slaves it was customary for Town Meetings to farm-out the local poor. The wealthier rate-payers "bid-off" these unfortunates, who then went to work for them in return for food, lodging and clothes. The town-charges thus became a form of indentured servants, and in addition the good citizen who took them received from the town a sum of money equivalent to his "bid."[39]

Robinson and Rispin admired the ability and industry of the Nova Scotian women as much as they despised that of the men. The passages in their *Journey* dealing with this subject

35 Harvey, "Township Government," 22.

36 J. T. McNeill, "Religious and Moral Conditions among Canadian Pioneers, "*Papers of the American Society of Church History,* 2nd series, VIII, 67-122.

37 1 Geo. III, Cap. 1, *Acts of the General Assemblies.*

38 *Nova Scotia Gazette,* July 9, 1776. See also *Ibid.,* May 28, 1776. The price of slaves varied from £20 to £75 N. S. money. Cf., T. W. Smith, "The Slave in Canada." *N.S.H.S.,* X, 11 ff.

39 Eaton, *Kings County,* 162.

are a valuable contribution to a social history of the times. The women were industrious housewives, spinning their own linen and woolen cloth from homegrown flax and wool. They made their own bleaches, dyes, candles, soap, starch, yeast, and "a kind of liquor by boiling the branches of the spruce tree, to which they add molasses, and cause it to ferment in the manner we do treacle beer in England." During the week they dressed in "woolseys both for petticoats and aprons," and instead of stays they wore "a loose jacket like a bed-gown." They wore their hair tied "in their necks" and fixed to the crown of their heads. In the summer both men and women went barefoot. On Sundays woolseys were replaced by silks and calicoes, with long ruffles, their hair was dressed high and many wore no caps. "When at Church, or Meeting, from the Mistress to the scullion girl, they have their fans. We even thought, in the article of dress, they outdid the good women of England."[40]

The men's clothing consisted of checked shirts and long trousers in summer, and "linsey-woollsey shirts, also breeches, stockings and shoes" in winter. On Sundays, the men wore "the finest cloth and linen and ruffled shirts," so that "you would scarce know them to be the same people." Their hair was done in a queue.

Houses were built of logs or boards. Sometimes the frames were brought from New England. By 1774, in the older settlements, many of the buildings were clapboarded and shingled on the outside, and wainscotted within.[41] In the newer townships, however, people continued to live in the most miserable hovels. Many of the early missionaries have left accounts of the sufferings they endured from cold and vermin in these pioneer dwellings where sometimes a pile of straw on the mud floor was their only bed.

For recreation the Pre-Loyalists had to depend largely upon themselves. Henry Alline, who before his conversion was a leader among the younger set in Falmouth, has left accounts of evenings spent at neighbors' homes, where the young people amused themselves singing "carnal songs," telling stories, and causing great mirth by imitating the "extra-ordinaries" of the

40 Robinson and Rispin, *A Journey*, 25, 36.

41 For an account of early provincial architecture see Brebner, *Neutral Yankees*, 172ff.

Newlights, whom some of them remembered before 1760 in Connecticut.[42] Sometimes an Acadian fiddler provided the music for the dances, or in his absence the dancing was to the accompaniment of singing. The main diversion of the men, however, must have continued to be hunting and fishing. Robinson and Rispin report that it was customary for the men to spend many weeks in the woods, "sleeping out like Indians." In the year 1772, "Mooseskins, small Furrs, Beaver, Feathers," are listed along with "Grindstones and Rum," as the chief exports of Nova Scotia.[43]

Intellectually and culturally, like any frontier community, Nova Scotia was very destitute. In Halifax there was a certain interchange of ideas, due to the greater wealth of the merchants, the close family and business relations with Boston, and the presence of civil and military officials from England. The first Canadian newspaper, *The Halifax Gazette,* was established on March 23, 1752, and another, *The Halifax Journal,* began publication in January 1781.

On September 17, 1776, the *Gazette* carried an advertisement for a sale of a library. Included among the titles were, eight volumes of the *Dictionary of Arts and Sciences;* Burgh's *Dignity of Human Nature;* Butler's *Analogy;* Priestley's and Furneaux's *Letters on Toleration;* seven volumes of *The Spectator;* four of *The Rambler; Tristram Shanty;* Clark's *Sermons;* Pope's *Works; The Complete Letter Writer; The Complete English Tradesman;* Dodd's *Sermon to Young Men;* Tate and Brady's *Psalms;* Mason on *Elocution;* and the *Court Calendar* for 1775. From this selection of rationalistic and theological literature it would be difficult to say whether the "Gentleman about to leave the Province" was a "complete tradesman" or a latitudinarian missionary of the S.P.G. It is unlikely, however, that either *The Nova Scotia Gazette* or any of the books advertised in it ever reached the isolated out-settlements, or if the former did, it was only after many months. So poor was the mail service that public dispatches and letters were sent to Boston and thence to their destination along the Cape Sable Coast or the shores of the Bay of Fundy by the uncertain means of coastal

42 Henry Alline, *Life and Journal* (Boston, 1806), 15, 30; see also J. B. Calkin, *Old Time Customs* (Halifax, 1918), 20ff.

43 *Report of the Present State and Condition of Nova Scotia, 1773,* 31.

traders.[44] Simeon Perkins, the wealthiest citizen of Liverpool, and a government official, tells in his *Diary* of hearing that there was a letter for him on a vessel fifty or sixty miles along the coast, and how long it was before he got it.[45]

The effect of such isolation was to limit the reading of the settlers to the Bible and the few books they may have brought with them into the country. The result was a provincialism and ignorance which, added to the self-conceit and indolence already observed, made the Pre-Loyalists particularly objectionable to the later immigrants to Nova Scotia, many of whom were educated and cultured people.

In the original plans for the settlement of the province the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts* was asked to provide school teachers as well as missionaries for the new communities.[46] Unfortunately, the salary paid to such teachers was only £10 a year, so the Society had great difficulty in keeping their posts filled. Schools were kept open more or less regularly at Halifax, Lunenburg, and Annapolis, and occasionally at Windsor, Cornwallis, and Cumberland. The curriculum was largely the Bible and the Anglican catechism, and the purpose of it, confirmation.[47] Thus, the Dissenting New Englanders were compelled to find teachers of their own, or risk having their children contaminated with Arminianism. When Congregational or Presbyterian ministers were available, they generally taught some pupils in their homes. The more prosperous settlers sometimes contributed jointly to the salary of a teacher for their children.[48] Frequently, however, these wandering teachers were men who had failed in some other field and were ill-fitted for their tasks. In 1765 the Assembly passed *An Act Concerning Schools and Schoolmasters*, which required all would-be teachers to be examined by a minister or two justices of the peace, and to present a certificate of morals and good conduct, signed by at least six inhabitants. He must also take the oath of allegiance. By the same act, boards of school trustees were set up to administer the lands reserved in the original

44 *Canadian Archives*, 1894, 273.

45 The *Diary* of Simeon Perkins, 1766-67, 1769-83, constitutes one of the finest sources for a social history of the period. The original diary is at Liverpool, N. S. For matter of letter, see entry for Sept. 20, 1782.

46 *Digest of Records, S.P.G.*, 108-109.

47 Brebner, *Neutral Yankees*, 195-196.

48 Calkin, *Old Time Customs*, 37ff.

plans of every township for a school.[49] This regulated the situation somewhat, but the great lack of proper schools was felt for many years. "This want of Instruction," wrote the Rev. Jonathan Scott in 1783, "has been more than twenty Years standing; so that the Youth in many Places, for want of proper and needful Instruction, are much exposed, and are ready to take in and become exceeding fond of, and established in the Belief of the Sentiments which we have taken a brief View of in the Foregoing Essay."[50]

One great social agency which played an important role in the lives of the Pre-Loyalists remains to be considered, that is, the Dissenting churches.

49 6 Geo. III, Cap. vii, *Acts of General Assemblies.* The effect of this act was to place the control of the school lands in the hands of the Anglican clergy, from which they were wrested only after a long and bitter struggle ending in an appeal to the Privy Council in the middle of the nineteenth century. Cf., Eaton, *Kings County*, 269-270.

50 Scott, *A Brief View* (Halifax, 1784), 205. The reference is to the "Beliefs and Sentiments," of the revivalist Henry Alline.

CHAPTER THREE

PROTESTANT DISSENTERS

"A considerable Part of them are poor People which it would not give a compassionate Shepherd much Satisfaction to get a Living out of them."
—Jonathan Scott (1784).

THE FIRST DISSENTING CHURCHES

While the Church of England was the first to send Protestant missionaries to Nova Scotia, and had the advantage of financial assistance from both the government and the Venerable Society, as well as the social and religious prestige pertaining to an established church, nevertheless, the majority of the population of the province before 1784 were Dissenters. In Halifax, even before the great New England migration of 1760, settlers from the American colonies composed a large and influential part of the community. A Protestant Dissenters' Meeting House, known as Mather's Place in honor of the well-known Boston divines, was erected in 1750 and was supplied by Congregational ministers until the end of the Revolution.[1] Other Congregational churches were formed at Chester, Liverpool, Barrington, Chebogue, Cape Forchu, Cornwallis, Granville, Cumberland, and Maugerville. The experience of these little isolated congregations presents an excellent case study of what happened to New England Congregationalism on the frontier.[2]

Presbyterianism was represented by the Scotch-Irish settlers, both those who came directly from Ulster and those who arrived by way of New Hampshire. They were, in the words of a later lieutenant-governor, "bigotted dissenters and of course great levellers."[3] Churches were established under the care of the Associate Synod of Glasgow at Truro and Londonderry. At Onslow there was a minister from the Synod of New York

1 Walter Murray, "History of St. Matthew's Church," *N.S.H.S.*, XVI, 137-170.
2 There is no general history of Congregationalism in Canada. Articles by James Woodrow and others in *The Canadian Independent*, XIII-XVI (1867-1870) were used by George Punchard, *History of Congregationalism in America* (Boston 1880), I, 550ff. Information relating to individual churches must be gleaned from county and town histories and local historians. Ian F. Mackinnon, *Settlements and Churches*, is a valuable handbook of the location of the early churches.
3 *Canadian Archives*, 1894, 353.

and Philadelphia who also visited Pictou and other settlements. At Horton, a missionary of the General Associate Synod ministered to a church of Connecticut "Presbyterians."[4]

It is impossible to estimate the number of Baptists among the New England immigrants. A fully organized Baptist church, consisting of a pastor, the Rev. Nathan Mason, and thirteen adult members, migrated to Sackville (New Brunswick) from Swansea, Massachusetts, in the year 1763.[5] At least two other Baptist preachers labored in the province between 1763 and 1771. The Rev. John Sutton ministered to a church of mixed membership at Newport,[6] and Elder Ebenezer Moulton organized a church at Horton and preached at Yarmouth, Barrington, and other places.[7] There is also evidence of an early Baptist society in Annapolis County.[8] All these churches, however, had disappeared before the outbreak of the American Revolution.

At Cumberland, Yorkshire Methodists, some of whom had been personal friends and followers of the Rev. John Wesley, held cottage meetings among themselves although they were regarded as members of the Established Church of England.[9] Six missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel were stationed at the forts at Annapolis, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Windsor, Halifax, and Cornwallis, and conducted public worship in the nearby towns.[10] These were well provided for by both Church and State and enjoyed numerous benefits such as chaplaincies. While they, therefore, escaped the financial problems of the Dissenting clergy, their churches were subject to the other problems which confronted all organized religion on the new frontier.

4 James Robertson, *History of the Mission of the Secession Church to Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island* (Edinburgh, 1847), 18ff. William Gregg, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada* (Toronto, 1885), 60. "Rev. James Murdoch," *N.S.H.S., II*, 100-109.

5 O. O. Wright, ed., *History of Swansea* (Swansea, 1917), 111. In 1771 Pastor Mason and his church emigrated to Cheshire, Mass.

6 "A Brief Statement of the Circumstances of the Protestant Dissenters in Nova Scotia (1769)," in Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Mss., Vol. 284, doc. 18: E. M. Saunders, *History of the Baptists in the Maritime Provinces* (Halifax, 1902), 64.

7 M. W. Armstrong, "Elder Moulton and the Nova Scotia Baptists," *Dalhousie Review* (Oct. 1944), 320-323.

8 E. Frame, "Harvard Graduates in Nova Scotia," Mss. in Library of Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, page 36.

9 T. W. Smith, *History of the Methodist Church . . . of Eastern British America* (Halifax, 1877), I, 84-88.

10 A. W. H. Eaton, *The Church in Nova Scotia* (New York, 1891), 67ff.

These problems were, (1) the difficulty of securing adequate religious leadership; (2) the problem of maintainance; (3) the demoralization that accompanies the frontier; and (4) the effects of the American Revolution.

1. THE PROBLEM OF SECURING ADEQUATE RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP

Only a few of the land associations interested in Nova Scotia included ministers among their members. While American clergymen, like Dr. Witherspoon and Rev. Ezra Stiles, might speculate in new lands, they were not inclined to exchange their comfortable livings for the rigors of the frontier. The men who did accompany the settlers were men who had encountered difficulties at home and sought a new beginning;[11] those who came later were for the most part recent college graduates just beginning their ministry. The problem of securing either kind was complicated by the geographical remoteness of the colony and the slowness of communications. Negotiations were long drawn out and often ended in disappointment.

In this regard the Ulster settlements had some advantage over the New England townships. The latter being Congregationalists were compelled to treat with individual ministers or at best small associations of churches in the older colonies. The Ulstermen, on the other hand, could negotiate with the centralized courts of American, Irish, and Scottish Presbyterianism and to some extent profit by the growing interest in "foreign missions." Thus in 1764 the Presbytery of New Brunswick, New Jersey, received an application for a minister from "the people of Halifax and other parts of Nova Scotia." In response, Mr. James Lyon, a recent graduate of the College of New Jersey (Princeton), was ordained to go to Nova Scotia "at discretion for a space of ten months or longer if the state of affairs require it."[12]

11 John Seccomb had been involved in scandal, Israel Cheever and Nathaniel Porter had been dismissed, Elder Moulton was wanted for debt. The Anglican bishop Inglis later complained that a third of his clergy were actually harmful. *Canadian Archives*, 1912, 229.

12 Gregg, *Presbyterian Church*, 60. Lyon had been licensed to preach in 1763, *Records of the Presbyterian Church in U. S. A.* (Philadelphia, 1841), 330, 336, 342. Previous to that he had published a collection of psalm tunes called *Urania*, which has led to the assertion that he was "the first native of the Untied States to write a musical composition." Cf. O. G. Sonneck, *Francis Hopkinson. . . . and James Lyon, Patriot, Preacher, Psalmodist . . . Two Studies in Early American Music* (Washington, 1905), 131.

The Truro and Londonderry settlers, also wearying of "silent Sabbaths" and long waiting, petitioned the Associate Synod of Glasgow, beseeching the Synod "to commiserate their so very clamant circumstances, and appoint some of their number to come to their relief, that so in due time they may obtain the signal blessing of a fixed gospel ministry." A probationer, Mr. Samuel Kinlock, was sent over from Scotland to Nova Scotia in 1766, and in 1769 two ordained ministers, the Rev. David Smith of St. Andrews and the Rev. Daniel Cock of Greenock, were instructed by the Synod "to repair as soon as possible to the petitioners in Nova Scotia, in order to dispense the ordinances of the gospel among them," and also at their discretion "to answer petitions from other places in America.[13] These able missionaries did not reach their destinations until two or three years later.

Meanwhile, in 1766, the Anti-Burgher or General Associate Presbytery of Newton-Limavady had commissioned the Rev. James Murdoch as a missionary to the Province of Nova Scotia or any other part of the American Continent where God in his Providence shall call him.[14] After a short stay in Halifax, Mr. Murdoch settled in Lower Horton or Grand Pre. No other Anti-Burgher minister visited the province until the arrival of the Gaelic speaking James MacGregor at Pictou in 1786. On the whole, however, the Presbyterian method of petitioning a distant court for aid had proved very successful. At the end of twelve years there were four well-educated and able Presbyterian ministers in the province. Their work made the religious life of eastern Nova Scotia distinctly different from that of the New England settlements in the western counties.

The German Lutherans at Lunenburg also were able to secure a pastor by appealing to denominational authorities abroad. As early as 1765, the Rev. Robert Vincent, who had been appointed an associate minister at Lunenburg by the S.P.G.,

13 The complete text of the petitions and the Synod's action may be seen in Robertson, *History of the Mission*, 20-24.

14 "Rev. James Murdoch," *N.S.H.S.*, II, 101: Gregg, *Presbyterian Church in Canada*, 62-64. The Associate or Burgher Synod was the highest court of that branch of the Secession Church which accepted the "Burgess Oath," renouncing popery and accepting "the true religion" of the realm. The General Associate or Antiburgher Synod interpreted "true religion" to mean the established Church of Scotland from which they had seceded in 1733, and therefore they refused to take the oath. Burghers and Antiburghers divided in Scotland in 1747 and the differences were brought over to America.

reported that his parishioners were ". . . very anxious to introduce a German Minister and gone so far as to have prepared Timber towards erecting a Meeting House. This is the Result of ye Governments withdrawing their Bountys on ye Produce of their Lands, whilst that lasted they behaved with the greatest seeming Conformity, but now they have nothing more from thence the Mask is thrown off by some, the Young People in general will not adhere to the Scheme."[15]

This economic angle to the question of conformity to the Church of England suggests that by 1765 the German settlers had become self-supporting, and were in a position to make their long struggle for their own language and their own faith something more than a suppressed resentment. During the next seven years, long and intricate negotiations were carried on between the isolated "foreigners" and an obstructionist provincial government. Despite such obstacles as the interception of their mail, and the refusal of the magistrates to certify their statements, they finally succeeded in obtaining a minister from the Lutheran Synod of Pennsylvania. On November 1, 1772, twenty years after their arrival in the Province, the Reverend Frederich Schultz dedicated Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church at Lunenburg and became its first pastor.[16]

Unfortunately there were no higher ecclesiastical courts to which the majority of the settlers could turn for aid. From the very nature of their polity, Baptists and Congregationalists were independents. There is some evidence that the Baptist churches in the older colonies, which were expanding at this time, felt a responsibility for their members who had gone to Nova Scotia. On May 11, 1768, the Baptist Church at Rehoboth, Massachusetts, ordained the Rev. Nathaniel Rounds "to go labor in Nova Scotia with a people who went from these parts to settle there."[17] In 1763 the Rev. James Manning, the first president of Rhode Island College (now Brown University), visited Nova Scotia accompanied by the Rev. John Sutton who remained at

15 *Canadian Archives*, 1894, 262.

16 M. B. DesBrisay, *History of the County of Lunenburg*, 2nd ed. (Toronto,1895), 95. Mr. Shultz was from Wurtenburg, N. Y.

17 E. Frame, unpublished Mss., "Harvard Graduates in Nova Scotia," 36. Information concerning Rounds is very uncertain. Cf., David Benedict, *A General History of the Baptist Denomination* (New York, 1848), 534; and F. L. Weis, *The Colonial Clergy and the Colonial Churches of New England* (Lancaster, Mass., 1938), 177f.

Newport, N. S., for three or four years.[18] The growing political unrest preceding the war, together with the economic depression, seem to have ended whatever plans the Baptists may have had for Nova Scotia. By 1773 all their churches were disbanded and their ministers had left the province.

Among the Congregationalist settlers there was a wide difference of opinion as to how to go about the business of securing a minister. Under the Saybrook Platform of Connecticut, the churches were organized into consociations with an annual General Assembly of ministers for the whole province. But this "presbyterianization" of Congregationalism was not accepted in Massachusetts where the churches clung to their original independence. Nor was the Saybrook Platform by any means unanimously agreed to in Connecticut. The Strict Congregationalists or Separates had protested and struggled against its enforcement for years. An examination of the towns from which the Pre-Loyalist settlers came reveals that almost half of them were places where separations had occurred after the notorious Ecclesiastical Law of 1742.[19] One of the agents who interviewed the Nova Scotia government regarding lands for Connecticut settlers in 1759 was Bliss Willoughby, who five years before had been ordained over the Separate New Light Church at Newent Center (Norwich, Conn.), and in 1756 had been one of the committee sent to England to seek toleration for the Separates.[20] At Falmouth the moderator of the first proprietor's meeting was Shubael Dimock, a deacon of the Separate Church at Mansfield, Connecticut, who had suffered "such a flood of persecution from the ruling powers in church and State"[21] that he had sought refuge in the new province. With such diverse elements in their midst, the New England settlements were divided from the beginning on ecclesiastical questions.[22]

18 R. A. Guild, *Early History of Brown University* (Providence, 1897), 10, 42, 214. The presence of Manning and Sutton probably is the basis of the tradition that there were two Suttons in N. S. Cf., Benedict, *A General History*, 521. John Sutton was a graduate of Hopewell Academy, N. J., and from 1761-66 minister at Cape May, N. J.

19 Cf., Eaton, *Kings County*, 69-70; 87-88.

20 Blake, *Separates*, 123, 155. Mr. Willoughby did not stay in N. S.

21 *Ibid.*, 163; Larned, *Windham County*, I, 436; Tracy, *Great Awakening*, 322-323; Benedict, *A General History*, 532.

22 The church at Cornwallis was rent from the beginning on the question of receiving a minister who had been ordained under the provisions of the Saybrook Platform. New Lights and Old Lights also differed on the question of whether the minister's

Congregational practice regarding ordination added to the confusion of the infant churches. According to the Cambridge Platform (1648), a pastor must not only be chosen by a church but also ordained "by imposition of hands and prayer" especially for that church. Even though he had been ordained previously in some other church, he must be ordained over again, because "ordination doth not constitute an officer; . . . church officers are officers to one church." "He that is clearly loosed from his office-relation unto that church whereof he was a minister, cannot be looked at as an officer, nor preform any acts of office in any other church, unless he be again orderly called unto office."[23]

In the early New England churches, three or four of "ye gravest members of ye church" laid their hands on the head of the pastor-elect, but even by the time of the Synod of 1648 it was recognized that "in such churches where there are no elders, and the church so desire, we see not why imposition of hands may not be performed by the elders of other churches."[24] More and more it became the practice to invite neighboring ministers and churches, acting in council, to participate in the service of ordination. But in Nova Scotia there were no neighboring ministers and churches. Three methods of procedure were adopted to solve the problem of ordination.

The first was to have the candidate solemnly set apart for his work by a special ecclesiastical council in New England. In arranging such a service the owners and captains of fishing and trading schooners plying back and forth between the new settlements and the New England ports played an important part. They scouted for talent, carried the letters-missive from the churches, and attended the meetings of the councils themselves as the representatives of the distinct parishes. Usually the councils were held in some area from which the settlers had originally emigrated, and where their former pastors still felt a personal interest in their spiritual welfare. Thus Israel Cheever was ordained at Rochester, Mass., on September 19, 1761, to serve the congregation of Plymouth and Cape Cod settlers at

salary should be raised by voluntary gifts or by assessment and rates. Cf., Eaton, *Kings County*, 272ff.

23 *The Cambridge Platform* (1648), IX, 1, 6, 7.

24 *Ibid.*, IX, 5. In Connecticut the *Saybrook Platform* (1708), made such ministerial collaboration compulsory.

Liverpool, N. S.[25] Arzareleah Morse, after a year of probation along the Annapolis River, was given "a unanimous call to the ministry," and was ordained "by the desire of the people of Annapolis and Granville at Falmouth, in the County of Barnstable, July 13, 1771."[26] The Rev. Benaiah Phelps of Cornwallis also served for one year on probation after his ordination in 1765 by the South Hartford Association in Connecticut.[27] On May 7, 1772, the following account of the ordination of the Rev. Jonathan Scott appeared in the *Massachusetts Gazette & Boston Weekly News Letter*:

Middleborough, April 27, 1772.

This day was ordained, the Rev. Jonathan Scott of Yarmouth in Nova Scotia, over a Church and Society there. The Rev. Mr. Reed began with prayer, Rev. Mr. Porter of Bridgewater preached the Sermon suitable to the occasion from Acts xvii, 2, 3, 4. Rev. Mr. Parker of Plympton, Moderator spoke. Mr. Scott's confession of faith was publickly read, and approved, the commissioners from Nova Scotia renewed the call which being accepted, the charge was given by Rev. Mr. Shaw of Bridgewater, the congregational prayers by Rev. Mr. Robbins of Plymouth, the right hand of fellowship by Rev. Mr. Conant of Middleborough. And tho' there was a very numerous Assembly yet the whole was conducted with unusual Seriousness, Decency and Solemnity.[28]

The new minister carried back to Nova Scotia with him a letter from the Council to the church in Yarmouth which was publicly read after meeting at Chebogue on May 17, 1772. "By the lifting up the Hand unanimously" it was then voted by both church and congregation together that the Rev. Jonathan Scott be accepted as their pastor.[29]

At least one sermon preached in New England at the ordina-

25 James Woodrow, "The Ancient Congregational Church at Liverpool, N. S.," *The Canadian Independent*, XVI (Jan. 1870), 251. Mr. Cheever had been pastor of the First Church of New Bedford, Mass., from 1753 to 1759, but had been dismissed. Cf., W. J. Potter, *The First Congregational Society in New Bedford* (New Bedford, 1889), 33.

26 E. Frame, "Harvard Graduates," 17. Morse was a native of Falmouth, Mass., and graduated from Harvard in the class of 1767. His name is sometimes spelt Asarelah.

27 J. H. Cox, *History of the Congregational Church of Cornwallis* (Cornwallis, 1900), 2; Eaton, *Kings County*, 272ff.; some of the Cornwallis settlers objected to Mr. Phelps and refused to have him regularly settled over them until 1766.

28 *Massachusetts Gazette & Boston Weekly News Letter*, May 7, 1772; also, *Records of Church of Jebogue*, in Public Archives of Nova Scotia, 33-34.

29 *Ibid.*, 46. The First Church in Middleborough at this time presented Mr. Scott with "Two large and decent Flagons, and four Cups, all of Pewter, and a fine linen Table-Cloth and two Napkins," for the first communion service in Yarmouth. The generosity of the Middleborough church was also evinced by the fact that they bore the full expense of the ordination council. *Jebogue Records*, 33, 51.

tion of a pastor for Nova Scotia was published and has been preserved. On October 12, 1768, the Rev. Ebenezer Gay, the venerable minister of Hingham, Massachusetts, preached *A Call from Macedonia: A Sermon Preached at Hingham in New England . . . at the Ordination of the Reverend Caleb Gannett, to the Work of the Ministry, and the Pastoral Care of a Society of Protestant Christians in the Town of Cumberland and the Province of Nova Scotia.* The sermon was printed in Boston in the same year.[30]

It will be noticed that Mr. Gannett was not ordained over a church but over a "Society." This distinction was familiar in New England and had important repercussions in Nova Scotia. According to early Congregational practice a church was formed by the inhabitants of a town entering into a formal covenant with one another, with the approval of the civil authorities and of neighboring churches. By the end of the seventeenth century, however, certain fundamental changes had taken place. Because all the inhabitants of a township were taxed to support the church, and because, as time passed, more and more of them were unable to make the relation of religious experience required for full church membership, it became a recognized practice to permit the legal voters of the parish, irrespective of their church membership, to co-operate in selecting a minister, and in other important matters affecting the religious life of the community. Thus a dual organization of "the Church" and "the Parish or Society" emerged. As long as the majority of the legal voters in a town were church members, they held the power in both meetings; but when they were a minority, as they frequently were, or in a new community where a church had not not yet been gathered, the society actually controlled the religious destiny of the settlement.[31] This explains how meeting-houses were erected at Barrington and Yarmouth before there was any church, and how ministers such as Caleb Gannett were called to take charge of a parish, and were ordained over a congregation before there was a covenanted church.

30 Caleb Gannett graduated from Harvard in 1763 and preached in Cumberland on probation before his ordination. In 1773 he was appointed tutor in mathematics and philosophy at Harvard College and in 1780 he became steward of the college, which office he held until his death in 1818. See "Sketch of the Life and Character of Caleb Gannett, Esq.," *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, VIII, 2nd series (1819), 277.

31 Cf., Williston Walker, *History of the Congregational Churches in the United States* (New York, 1894), 220-222.

The second way in which the Nova Scotian Dissenters overcame the problem of ordination was simply to ignore it. The frontier tended to make men impatient with restrictive regulations and forms. If a community was fortunate enough to have in their midst a minister who had already been ordained, they were inclined to give him ministerial standing despite the warning of the *Cambridge Platform.* Thus there is no record of the ordination of the Rev. John Seccomb of Chester, although he was a prominent minister and frequently supplied the pulpit of the Protestant Dissenting Meeting House in Halifax.[32] Neither Samuel Wood of Barrington nor Nehemiah Porter of Cape Forchu, Yarmouth, were ever ordained over these churches. In the latter case the *Minutes* of the steps leading up to the organization of the church gives a valuable account of the procedure followed by the Pre-Loyalist Congregationalists.

Yarmouth in Nova Scotia Wednesday, August 12th, 1767. Met together at the house of Mr. Richd. Rose, a considerable number of persons, who had been members of churches in full Communion and had owned the Covenant where they had formerly lived, who have lately settled in this Town; and spent most of the Day in prayer with Fasting and in conference together, relating to their entering into the Church State. Their religious exercises and conferences were carried on with solemnity and regularity. And they were generally agreed to proceed into Chh. State as soon as could be conveniently. But their having no written credentials (tho' they had verbal ones) nor any Dismission from nor consent of the church they belonged to, for their Purpose was a Difficulty; which they would gladly have removed; but sending this summer and Fall to the many distant Towns in Massachusetts and Connecticut where they had lived was impracticable—and they were very loath to put off so good a work to another year if it might be done this, without too great impropriety—Whereupon, having considered of the matter, they concluded that their brethren in New England would be glad at their making all convenient Haste, rather than defer their Purpose for the Interests of Religion among them until they had opportunity to send. Whereupon, they appointed another meeting on Wednesday, the 19 instant, for conferring further about the Matter, on which Day they had a sermon preached suitable to the occasion—and apprehending themselves called of God, they concluded to proceed into a Church State, and appointed Wednesday the second of September following to be the date for the Purpose.

Accordingly, on the Lord's Day 23 of August publick notice was given of ye intended Proceeding into a Church State, the names of the Persons

32 John Seccomb had been pastor of the First Church of Harvard, Mass., 1733-1757. He was rather famous as the author of the humorous poem, *Father Abbey's Will,* which appeared in *The Gentleman's Magazine* and *The London Magazine* in May 1732. He wrote an account of the revival of religion at Harvard, Mass., in *The Christian History,* March 17, 1744. See J. L. Sibley ed. *Father Abbey's Will, etc.* (Cambridge, 1854).

who had agreed thus to unite were read; and their Covenant was read; and the manner of their Proceeding was declared—and it was signified in the Assembly that if any had reasonable objections to make against either of the Persons, or any part of the Proceedings they might have opportunity and were desired to signifie it before the Day appointed for gathering the Church:

The same publick Notice was given in the assembly at Jebogue on a publick Lecture the Wednesday following the Sabbath.

On Wednesday the second of September 1767 the Brethren met in the forenoon and there having been no objection made against any part of their Proceeding, nor any Person, but was entirely removed; The Brethren signed their Covenant.

And at eleven o'clock all the People met, a sermon upon the Occasion was preached, the Brethren were solemnly charged and exhorted, the Church Covenant was read the Brethren all standing, and holding up the Hand while it was read—the Exercises of the Day were concluded, as they were begun, with solemn Prayer and Praise. "And all the People rejoiced and gave Praise unto God."[33]

This document is instructive in showing how Congregational methods of procedure, evolved by generations of self-reliant and free men, were adapted to the frontier. In receiving members of other churches without proper letters of dismissal, they were violating one of the most emphatic rules of the *Cambridge Platform,* but they excused themselves on the ground that the true interests of religion in the new colony demanded such innovations. On the same grounds, no doubt, they justified their acceptance of the Rev. Nehemiah Porter as their pastor without a special ordination.

"The Covenant of the First Church in Yarmouth in Nova Scotia" is a splendid example of the type and amount of Puritanism the Pre-Loyalists brought with them from New England. In words, at least, these men of the eighteenth century paid homage to the ideals of the past, and in simply repeating them to their children perpetuated their influence in the new land. Like the Puritans of the seventeenth century, the Yarmouth Christians set out to approve themselves to be the Lord's in their particular callings, "shunning Idleness as the Bane of any State; yet knowing, in some measure, how deceitful are our Hearts, and how taking and prevalent the allurements of the World," they undertook to "engage a due Distance from the vanities of the world" in their affections, and to allow

33 A manuscript copy of the Records of the First Church in Yarmouth is in the Congregational Library, Boston. See also J. M. Lawson, *Yarmouth Past and Present* (Yarmouth, 1902), 513-520.

their souls in their "single and secret walk with God, due time for Acts of secret Worship."[34] There is no way of knowing how much of this is just conventional religious language, but we do know that in the neighboring church of Jebogue a written relation of religious experience was required of all candidates for church membership; "And those who cannot write, the Pastor shall write their Experience and religious Exercises from their own Mouth, which shall be read before the Church previous to their Admission."[35] In short, it was the purpose of these Pre-loyalist pioneers "That we who are now combining together in a new church of Jesus Christ may by the purity of our faith and Morals, become one of those golden Candlesticks among which the son of God in a way of favor and protection will condescend to walk."[36]

Frontier self-assertiveness and independence exhibited themselves finally in the determination of certain churches to ordain their own ministers. The Congregationalists at Jebogue and the German Reformed at Lunenburg each chose one of their own members to be their pastor. The Germans acted according to constitutional Presbyterian practice, and having chosen a devout fisherman, who in the documents of the period is called "Mr. Bruin Romcas Comingoe," but who was commonly known as "Mr. Brown," they requested two Presbyterian and two Congregational ministers to constitute themselves into a special presbytery for the purpose of ordaining him. The four, Murdoch of Horton, Lyon of Truro, Seccomb of Chester, and Phelps of Cornwallis, met on July 3, 1770, in the Protestant Dissenting Meeting House in Halifax, and in the presence of Lord William Campbell, members of His Majesty's Council, and other distinguished guests, proceeded with the ordination. Everything was done with great care and precision and the Rev. John Seccomb's *Sermon* preached on this occasion, together with "An Appendix containing the Reasons for Ordination

34 *Ibid.*, 518.

35 *Jebogue Records*, 50. There is no suggestion here of the Half-Way Covenant, but at Cape Forchu there is explicit provision for two rolls of members viz. those "in full communion," and those "who have owned the Covenant." Lawson, *Yarmouth*, 515-516. This is the only direct evidence of the Half-Way Covenant in Nova Scotia.

36 "Documents of the Congregational Church at Maugerville," *N.B.H.S.* (1894), I, 120. The covenant of this church stresses the adherence of the subscribers to the doctrines of "The Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly of Divines," and the "platform" agreed upon by the Synod of Cambridge in New England." It stresses "utter dislike of the Pelagian arminian principles vulgarily so called."

with Questions publickly propounded," was published by A. Henry, the Halifax printer, and sold for one shilling a copy, so that all the facts of this precedent-breaking ceremony might be understood.[37] On the title page of this pamphlet it is stated that this sermon was "the first preached in the province on such an occasion." Actually, nine and a half months earlier, under much humbler and ruder circumstances, an ordination had taken place in Nova Scotia.

During the autumn of 1766, although the people had no settled minister, there had been a religious awakening in the township of Yarmouth. "There appeared extraordinary Concern and Engagedness on the Minds of some, and there was a Meeting set up on the Week Time, for Prayer and religious Conference," at both Jebogue and Argyle. The result was that on December 18, 1767, ten men and one woman met together in this lonely outpost of church and empire and covenanted that they would submit themselves to the Word and Spirit of God, maintain Gospel ordinances, watch over one another in daily frequent exhortations to duty, and admonish one another in case of sin and failing.[38] The fourth article of this *Jebogue Covenant* contains a clear statement of the right of a Congregational church to ordain its own officers.

In keeping with this doctrine, the new church next proceeded to choose one of their own member, John Frost, who was a justice of the peace and one of the first grantees of Argyle, to be their elder. This was done despite the opposition of the Society, who felt that Squire Frost did not have "the Gifts to edify Others as a publick Teacher."[39] He had evidently been a Newlight or Separate in New England and now scorned the opposition of the unconverted as well as the assistance of the Rev. Nehemiah Porter and Elder Moulton who were both residents of Yarmouth. In the face of widespread "Uneasiness and Disaffection," he arranged to have four laymen ordain

37 John Seccomb, *A Sermon preached at Halifax, July 3, 1770, at the Ordination of Rev. Bruin Romcas Comingoe, to the Dutch Calvinistic Presbyterian Congregation at Lunenburg . . .* (Halifax, 1770) The presbytery took care to point out that they did not intend to establish a precedent "in this infant colony or elsewhere, unless in cases of necessity." Mr. Brown's qualifications were summed up in the maxim : *Bonus textuarius est bonus Theologus.*

38 *Jebogue Records*, 5-6. A digest of the Westminster Confession of Faith was attached to the Covenant.

39 Jonathan Scott, *Brief View* (Halifax, 1784), 287. The church members feared "they should bring Guilt upon themselves if they should overlook this Servant of Christ." *Jebogue Records*, 14.

him to the ministry. The Minute of this first Protestant ordination in what is now the Dominion of Canada is preserved in the *Records of Jebogue Church* as follows:

> September ye 21, 1769. This Day, the first Church in Yarmouth ordained Mr. John Frost Esqr., to the Pastoral Office over them; This was done by Prayer, Imposition of Hands, and solemn Charge to the faithful Discharge of his Office. The Brethren of the Church that preformed this Work, being nominated and chosen for the Purpose, were John Crawley Esqr., Deacon James Robbins, Mr. Daniel Crocker, and Mr. Moses Scott.[40]

This scene was far less colorful and spectacular than the much publicized ordination of Mr. Bruin Romcas Comingoe at Halifax in the following year, but it was no less significant, for it pointed to the coming ascendency of Newlight principles in Nova Scotian Congregationalism.

By 1770 there were nine ordained Congregational ministers in Nova Scotia. Despite the many obstacles and difficulties in the way, the settlers from New England had actually succeeded in solving the problem of religious leadership in shorter time than it took their Presbyterian neighbors. Harsh economic and social facts, however, soon dispelled this early promise of religious vigor and achievment.

2. THE PROBLEM OF MAINTENANCE

The economic situation of the Pre-Loyalist churches is set forth plainly in a *Memorial* from the Cornwallis church.[41]

The church had suffered from the usual cycle of crop failures and extraordinary expenses associated with a new settlement. The meeting-house, erected at Chipman's Corner in 1767 or 1768, had been an additional expense.[42] Similar situations existed in other towns. The result was that the people were not able to fulfill their financial contracts with

40 *Jebogue Records*, 16. M. W. Armstrong, "The First Protestant Ordination in Canada," *The Dalhousie Review* (Apr. 1947), 53-59.

41 S. A. Green, *Congregational Churches in Nova Scotia* (Cambridge, 1888), 3-5. This is a reprint of letters and documents printed in *Proceedings of Massachusetts Historical Society, 2nd Series* IV, 67ff.

42 "It was a large, square, two-story building, capable of seating a thousand persons. The high-backed pews were arranged in four tiers, and there was a lofty pulpit surmounted by a New England sounding board."—Eaton, *Kings County*, 277. There is no record of the cost of this building but a somewhat similar structure, "Old Zion," at Liverpool was completed in 1776 at a cost of £804; J. F. More, *History of Queens County* (Halifax, 1873), 113. Meeting-houses were also erected at Barrington (1765); Jebogue (1766); Granville (1776); and Maugerville (1775).

their ministers; indeed, long years afterward Nova Scotia continued to be dubbed "Nova Scarcity."

The ordinary stipend promised to a Dissenting minister at this period was about £80 a year.[43] Even taking into consideration the depreciated value of colonial currency this was much less than the usual rate paid in New England. At Harvard, Massachusetts, for example, the Town Meeting offered £300 for the "Incouragement" of their first minister, the Rev. John Seccomb, and £120 a year for his "continual Support."[44] At Chester, N. S., he "never had any Established Salary," but received perhaps £20 a year from his parishioners. Consequently, he was "in very necessitous Circumstances." Similarly, in 1749 Nehemiah Porter had been called to the First Church in Essex, Massachusetts, at £500 provincial money.[45] Twenty years later he wrote from Yarmouth, N. S., "About two-thirds of the Inhabitants here have laid themselves under some Obligation to give me Fifty Pounds per Annum, but I have not received the One half of that, for the Time that I preached here since last Summer was three Years, the People not being well able."[46] Rev. Samuel Wood of Barrington "preacht for nothing."

In January, 1770, in answer to a letter of inquiry from some Boston ministers, two outstanding Halifax laymen, Benjamin Gerrish and Malachy Salter, wrote an account of the "Circumstances of the Dissenting Clergy and their Congregations within this Province." In it they show that seven of the eight Dissenting ministers they know of are in very straitened circumstances. Three of them have no established salary, and are "often destitute of the necessary's of Life." The salaries of three others are greatly in arrears making it extremely difficult for them to support their families.[47] Only the Rev. William Moor of Halifax and the Rev. Caleb Gannett of Cumberland had received their salaries in full, and this because of the exertion of a few individuals in their congregations. Had it not been for them, these gentlemen's "Subsist-

43 Cf., Letter from Bn. Gerrish and Malachy Salter to Rev. A. Elliot and Saml. Cooper, Jan. 18, 1770, in Green, *Congregational Churches*, 5-6.
44 H. S. Nourse, *History of the Town of Harvard* (Harvard, 1894), 180.
45 Robert Crowell, *History of the Town of Essex* (Essex, 1868), 170. The value of the £500 was to vary according to the price of such articles as butter at 7s. per 1 lb., pork at 2s 6d., and molasses at 20s. per gal.
46 Porter to Eliot, Nov. 16, 1770, Green, *Congregational Churches*, 9.
47 *Ibid.*, 5-6.

ance would be too precarious" to induce them to remain in the province.

As a result of the information contained in this report, Dr. Andrew Eliot, the Rev. Samuel Cooper, and other friends in New England sent a gift of £100 for the relief of "the indigent dissenting Ministers" in Nova Scotia.[48] A similar appeal carried to England by the Rev. William Moor had a less fortunate outcome.[49] In May, 1770, King George III subscribed £1000 towards the relief of the Nova Scotian Dissenters. Other sums of money were also received. In June, Mr. Moor was honored with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by Aberdeen University. Shortly afterwards he suddenly disappeared, and with him all trace of the fund and of the royal gift.[50]

During the years 1771-1772, economic conditions became steadily worse. The ten years exemption from quit-rents was nearing its expiration on many farms. Many of the settlers had not fulfilled the conditions of their grants which required them "to cultivate, improve, or inclose one third part of their lands within the space of ten years," and therefore faced forfeiture. There was a province-wide effort to dispose of excess lands and even whole farms. Land values decreased and an agricultural depression set in. An anonymous member of the provincial assembly, writing about 1774, described the situation in melancholy terms: "Husbandmen dispirited,—a Depravity of Manners, a Contempt of the Laws and a Want of Confidence in Government universally prevailing."[51] In a letter to Dr. Chauncy of Boston, the Rev. Caleb Gannett of Cumberland wrote:

> Many of the people are discouraged. Several have left the province. Others are preparing for their departure; and most of the rest are held only by their interest. Such measures being preventive of any new settlers coming to the place, those who are there cannot sell their possessions, therefore are unable to remove themselves and families elsewhere, and so remain disheartened. It has become impracticable for them under their

48 Letter of Bn. Garrish to A. Eliot and S. Cooper, May 10, 1770, in Green, *Congregational Churches*, 8. Mr. Gerrish recommends that the money be spent in Boston to buy "Pork, Flour, Meal, Chocolate, Coffee, Tea, Sugar, &c., &c.," for the use of the ministers' families.

49 In Public Archives of Nova Scotia. Vol. 284, doc. 18.

50 Frame, "Harvard Graduates," 6.

51 *An Essay on the Present State of the Province of Nova Scotia . . . by a Member of the Assembly* (n. p., n. d., probably Halifax, 1774), 5. Robinson and Rispin remark on the number of farms for sale and append a list of properties and prices at the end of their *Journey Through Nova Scotia* (1774), 14, 34ff.

reduced circumstances, to support their minister, and he has been obliged to ask a dismission from them.[52]

The economic insecurity and uneasiness of the Dissenting clergy were further increased by a move on the part of the Established Church to gain possessions of the glebe lands which the Dissenters had assumed were the property of the first minister of the townships and their successors.[53] At Cumberland the protest of the Dissenters over the seizure of the glebe by the Rev. John Eagleson, a missionary of the S.P.G., was unheeded. Mr. Gannett complained loudly that rights guaranteed to Dissenters by Governor Lawrence's second proclamation had been violated and that "the law of the province respecting contracts between Dissenters and their ministers is frustrated."[54] The influence of the Church of England in Halifax was too great and with the loss of his farm the Cumberland minister was forced to give up his charge.

On October 11, 1771, the following resolution was passed by the Governor and Council of Connecticut:

> *Resolved by this Board*: That the said Revd. Solomon Williams, in behalf of the church and town of Cornwallis have liberty to ask the charitable contributions of the inhabitants of the several religious societies of the towns of New London, Norwich, Windham, Lebanon, Colchester, Canterbury and Lyme: and said church and inhabitants of Cornwallis are hereby recommended to their Christian liberality.[55]

There is no record of the success of this collection. As political controversy and uncertainty were added to the financial distress of the churches, one by one the ministers resigned. By the end of 1771 five of the ten Congregational churches in Nova Scotia were vacant and three of the four Baptist preachers had left the province.

3. THE DEMORALIZING EFFECTS OF THE FRONTIER

In addition to the discouragement and demoralization re-

52 *Collections of Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2nd series, VIII, 283.

53 In each of the early townships a lot of land had been reserved by the Crown for the first minister of the town. This led to controversy not only with the Established Church but also among the Dissenters themselves. At Cornwallis and Annapolis, the Congregational ministers claimed the lands as their own personal grants and sold them to private individuals.

54 *Ibid.*, 283.

55 *The Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut*, XIII, 567. The districts designated by the Council were those from which the settlers had emigrated, many of them going from the First Church in Lebanon of which the aged Mr. Williams was the pastor.

sulting from poverty and uncertainty, the religious life of the Pre-Loyalist settlements also suffered from the inevitable coarsening of manners and narrowing of interests which is characteristic of frontier life.

From the beginning, in most of the settlements religious meetings were held on Sundays. The revival at Yarmouth had begun in this way. At Truro, the Ulstermen are said to have commenced stated worship eight days after their arrival in 1760.[56] At Barrington and Yarmouth, meeting houses were erected and public services regularly held even though they had no settled pastor. The organization of these early religious societies provides another interesting example of how New England Congregationalist polity was adapted to solve the problems of the frontier.

The historic *Cambridge Platform* had provided that the officers of a local church should consist of a pastor, a teacher, and a ruling elder.[57] This latter officer was to join with the pastor and teacher "in those Acts of spiritual Rule which are distinct from the ministry of the Word and Sacraments." His duties were largely concerned with discipline.

Professor Williston Walker has pointed out that early New England Congregationalism was always a little uncertain whether the ruling elder was a minister or a layman. In most of the churches the office did not survive the first generation of the settlers. In 1726 Cotton Mather stated that the ruling eldership had been "almost extinguished . . . within the half of One Century."[58] Its functions were absorbed by the pastoral office which also took over the work of the teacher. It is of more than passing interest therefore, to find the office of ruling elder revived in eighteenth-century Nova Scotia. At Barrington, Yarmouth, and Maugerville there are records of ruling elders being elected and, in the absence of regular pastors, exercising most of the prerogatives prescribed for them in the *Cambridge Platform.* Sometimes also the deacons, who originally were charged with "the care of the temporal good things of the church," assisted the elder in conducting public worship. Thus at Barrington, Elder Solomon Smith and Deacon Thomas Crowell took turns in leading the two services which were held each Sabbath-day. A

56 Haliburton, *Nova Scotia,* II, 42.
57 *Cambridge Platform,* VII.
58 W. Walker, *Congregationalists,* 227-229.

Mr. Pitts read the Scriptures and a Mr. King set the tunes for Watts' *Hymns and Spiritual Songs.*[59] Leslie Stephen has remarked that, "The study of the 18th century sermons . . . is not exhilarating . . . No one, unless he were confined to a desert island with no other form of literature at hand, could really affect to read them with pleasure. Dull, duller, and dullest are a sufficient critical vocabulary to describe their merits."[60] While some allowance must be made for the fact that he was referring to English sermons and not to the works of New England divines, nevertheless the picture of a frontier elder poring over the dim print of some Boston press is not very inspiring. Yet so strong was the habit of hearing a sermon that Sunday after Sunday the people listened to their elder read some musty discourse, and the worship was not complete without it.

Special services, such as thanksgivings and fasts, were conducted, in the absence of a pastor, by one of the church officers. At Maugerville, a marriage was solemnized by the following simple declaration in the presence of the church.

Maugerville, February 23, 1766.

In the presence of Almighty God and this Congregation, Gervas Say and Anna Russell, inhabitants of the above said township enter into marriage Covenant lawfully to dwell together in the fear of God the remaining part of our lives, in order to preform all ye duties necessary betwixt husband and wife, as witness our hands.[61]

The result of this aggressiveness and responsibility on the part of the laity was to increase their own sense of importance and independency. Jonathan Scott remarks of his friend John Frost, who was accustomed "to expound the Scriptures and exhort the People" in the half-finished meeting house at Jebogue: "Esquire Frost . . . appeared not to have so much Regard to the regular Ministrys of the Gospel, as I think would have been becoming . . . He appeared to me to favor the Separations from Churches that have in Years past taken place in that Land (New England)."[62] Such views were bound to offend the more conservative members of the community. Ignorant and tiresome

59 This information is from the Diary of Dr. T. O. Geddes, in Edwin Crowell. *Barrington Township* (Yarmouth, nd), 84, 166ff.

60 Leslie Stephen, *History of English Thought in the 18th Century* (London, 1876), II, 337.

61 *N.B.H.S.*, I, 72.

62 Scott, *Brief View*, 285. In 1769 church and society had parted in Yarmouth over the question of Mr. Frost's "gifts to edify as a publick Teacher." Many "hard and bitter Things were vented by both Parties, to the great Dishonor of God, and the hurt and wounding of Religion.' *Jebogue Records*, 15.

persons bent on "improving their gifts" caused hot debates and noisy demonstrations in the meetings. This led to schism and prolonged controversy in the already weakened congregations.

The besetting weakness of the Congregational churches was "Rashness and Censoriousness, and Bitterness of Speech and Carriage one towards another."[63] The church convenants had preserved a considerable portion of Puritanism which left the door open for continual spying and criticism. For example, the third article of the Jebogue Covenant calls upon the members "to watch over one another . . . in daily frequent Exhortations to Duty"; and in "Admonitions in Case of Sin and Falling." Among those things counted as sinful were:

> All foolish Talking and Jesting, and Wantoness; All vain Disputing about Words and Things that gender Strife; . . . also vain Company-keeping and spending Time idly, at Taverns and Tippling-Houses, or elsewhere: Evil Whispering or Backbiting of any Person: also carnal and unnecessary Discourse about worldly Things, especially on the Sabbath Day; . . . . And all other sins whatsoever, both of Omission and Commission.[64]

As the infant communities were thrown more and more upon their own resources, such small matters of scruple and discipline assumed an exaggerated importance. In the absence of any higher interests, the private lives and conduct of one's neighbors became the subject of conversation and debate. The *Records of Jebogue Church* are filled with cases of censure and discipline.

The following are examples of public acknowledgements of sin which were read before the church.

> Yarmouth, May ye 18, 1773. To the first Church of Christ in Yarmouth:
>
> Whereas we, the Subscribers, have lately grieved the Members of this Church, by our unbecoming Conduct and Behaviour, in joining with loose Company in Dancing and carnal Merriment; We do humbly and unfeignedly acknowledge our Fault herein to God, and this Church, in that we have dishonoured God and our Profession, and given Occasion for others to speak reproachfully of the Ways of God, and of his professed People. And we do humbly ask your Forgiveness, and your Prayers to God for

63 *Jebogue Records,* 20. In May, 1770 the Jebogue church was visited by Rev. Sylvester Conant and Rev. Solomon Reed of Middleborough, Mass. In their report on the divided state of the congregation they especially condemned censoriousness of spirit and recommended that church and society cooperate in choosing a minister, stressing the fact that if the church's minister "be entirely disagreeable to the Society, they have an undoubted natural Right to invite and hear" another minister.

64 *Ibid.,* 10-13.

us that he would forgive us what we have done to his Dishonour and the Dishonour of Religion: And we do unfeignedly promise before God and this Church, that through divine Assistance, we will shun the like Evil, of which we are now convinced and do make Acknowledgement: and for Time to come we will endeavour to shun and avoid whatsoever exposes us to commit sin.

To the Church of Christ of Jebogue in Yarmouth.

. . . . as I have been deficent in my Walk and Behaviour since I have lived in Yarmouth, and have given Occasion for Men to speak reproachfully of the Ways of God and Religion, I do now acknowledge the same to God, and before you his professed People; namely I have not kept the Door of my Lips, but have given Liberty to my Tongue to speak prophanely: I have given Way to, and exercised a bitter angry Spirit towards my Family, contrary to the Rule of the Gospel. I have at different Times and Places drank so freely of spiritous Liquors, that I have been in some Degree overcome thereby, and am not altogether free of the Sin of Drunkenness. I have often been overtaken in Sin, by Frolicking and Merriment, to the dishonor of Religion and the Disgrace of my hoar Hairs. In each of these particular Ways I have blemished my holy Profession; and therefore I humbly and unfeignedly acknowledge my Sin to God. . . . I humbly ask the Forgiveness of this Church, etc.[65]

One gets the impression that the religious life of the Pre-Loyalists was very circumscribed and was marred by constant bickering and strife. Large sections of the population were entirely indifferent to religion. The little churches with their ten or twenty members were divided and suspicious of one another. When the Rev. Jacob Bailey, the Loyalist clergyman of the Church of England, arrived at Annapolis County in 1782, he summed up the situation as follows:

It is impossible for a place to be more divided in religious sentiment than Granville. I suppose that there may be about a hundred families now, near half of which reckon themselves to be members of the Church of England, though subdivided into Deists, Socinians, Methodists and Whitefieldites. The remainder are Lutherans, Calvinists, Presbyterians, Seceders, Congregationalists, Anabaptists, Quakers, Everythingarians, Mystics and New Lights.[66]

About the same time, Aaron Bancroft, the last of the Harvard students to be approbated by the churches of New England to preach in Nova Scotia, was struggling to hold together the disintegrating Congregational churches in Yarmouth, Annapolis, and Kings counties. His analysis of the situation, written fifty years afterward, is still probably the truest picture of the religious state of the Protestant Dissenters.

65 *Ibid.*, 52, 90. See also the case of Israel Kenny 'Charged with scandalless Sins' etc., in "Documents of the Maugerville Church," *N.B.H.S.*, I, 121-122.

66 W. S. Bartlet, *The Frontier Missionary* (Boston, 1853), 207.

I found that the inhabitants of this province, collected from different parts of New England and of the parent country, brought their local prejudices with them, and did not readily associate in regular, permanent religious societies. This opened an extensive field for itinerant laborers, and I there became acquainted with fanaticism in various shapes and forms. Clergymen were not near from whom I might take advice, theological books were not within my reach, I was therefore thrown upon my own resources; and the situation was without question to me proved a good school.[67]

4. THE REVOLUTION

The final blow to Congregationalism in Nova Scotia was the American Revolution.[68] To the already demoralized and disintegrating churches were now added the calamities of a further loss of ministers, an increased uncertainty because of privateers and possible invasion, and the gnawing uneasiness of a divided loyalty.

By 1775, half of the Congregational pulpits were already vacant. During the war some of the ministers evinced republican sympathies, but were instantly silenced by the government. The Rev. Benaiah Phelps of Cornwallis was accused of being "an uncompromising Whig" and left the province in 1777. The Rev. Seth Noble of Maugerville, after months of seditious activity, fled to Machias. The Rev. Arzarelah Morse of Granville seems to have been peaceable enough, but at the close of the war gave up his trying charge and returned to New England. John Frost who had been ordained by the church of Jebogue was reported to the Provincial Council in the month of August, 1775, for interfering wth a muster of the militia at Argyle and for publicly expressing "his hopes and wishes that the British forces in America might be returned to England confuted and confused."[69] The Rev. John Seccomb of Chester was also charged before the Council with "preaching a Sermon tending to promote Sedition and Rebellion," and with "praying for the Success of the Rebels."[70] He was placed under a bond of £500 for his future good behaviour and henceforth had an uneventful career. Only the Rev. Israel Cheever of Liverpool, "a hard drinker," and

67 Aaron Bancroft, *A Sermon Delivered in Worcester, Jan. 31, 1836* (Worcester, 1836), 38, note H.

68 For fuller treatment of this subject see, M. W. Armstrong—"Neutrality and Religion in Revolutionary Nova Scotia," *The New England Quarterly*, Mar. 1946, 50-62.

69 Minutes of Council, Aug. 23, 1775. Mr. Frost was deprived of his office as justice of the peace and died shortly after.

70 *Ibid.*, Dec. 23, 1776, Jan. 6, 1777.

The Rev. Jonathan Scott, the farmer-pastor of Jebogue, avoided the political pitfalls of the times and labored to preserve the New England way in Nova Scotia.

The Presbyterian churches were not so seriously affected by the war. The Burgher and Anti-Burgher ministers from the old country were loyal to Great Britain. Only the Rev. James Lyon of New Jersey, who had once advised the patient Mr. Bruin Romcas Comingoe "to avoid a party spirit in politics,"[71] showed republican sentiments. Migrating to Machias, Maine, he became the centre of plots and schemes to capture Nova Scotia villages and plunder British shipping in the Bay of Fundy. There is some evidence that some of the Ulster settlers in Colchester County shared Parson Lyon's views. Writing from Halifax to the Secretary of State in 1776, General Massey said, "If your Lordship will pardon me for going out of my Walk . . . I take upon me to tell your Lordship that until Presbytery is drove out of His Majesty's Dominions, Rebellion will ever continue, nor will that Set ever submit to the Laws of England."[72]

Nova Scotians, however, geographically and politically were in no position to rebel. The settlements were too poor and scattered and the government, centralized in the hands of a small but determined group of officials in Halifax, was far too strong to be overthrown. Probably the memorial drawn up by the inhabitants of Yarmouth expresses the mind of many of the Pre-Loyalists:

> We were almost all of us born in New England, we have Fathers, Brothers & Sisters in that Country; divided betwixt natural Affection to out nearest Realtions, and good Faith and Friendship to our King and Country, we want to know, if we may be permitted at this time to live in a peaceable State, as we look on that to be the only Situation in which we with our Wives and Children, can be in any tolerable Degree safe.[73]

The effect of such divided allegiance and constant insecurity of life and property upon the religious life of the settlements was to widen the rifts which already existed among the people, and to leave the churches even more apathetic and destitute. Cut off from New England, their membership decreased, and their ministers gone, the prospects of the Nova Scotia Congregationalists

71 Gregg, *Presbyterian Church*, 67ff.
72 *Canadian Archives*, 1894, 335.
73 Quoted in Brebner, *Yankee Neutrals*, 310. For collection of memorials and petitions, etc., relating to Nova Scotia and the war, especially privateering, see E. D. Poole, *Annals of Yarmouth and Barrington . . . in the Revolutionary War* (Yarmouth, 1899).

seemed extremely forlorn. It was to churches in this condition and to a people in this state of mind that Henry Alline brought his gospel of new life and salvation.

The connection between the mental attitude of the "Yankee Neutrals" and the "Great Reformation under Mr. Alline" is a psychological problem which is very difficult to solve at this distance. One thing is perfectly clear. In a time of greatest doubt and discouragement, Alline and his followers in every township pointed out the blessings of peace, and turned men's thoughts away from the political issues of the day. The uncertain Nova Scotians were made to feel that in contrast with conditions in the other colonies their own lot was good, and that in escaping the horrors of war they had been the particular subjects of divine favor. Preaching in Liverpool, N. S., on a day of Thanksgiving, November 21, 1782, Henry Alline cried:

> How are we screened from the trials of our (once happy) Nation in the convulsions of the present Day? How have we sat in peace while this inhuman war hath spread devastation through our Neighboring Towns and Colonies like a flood? . . . . Yea, and when we have daily expected the impending cloud, and to share in the bitter cup, Heaven's indulgent hand has interposed and averted the blow. . . .
>
> While many an aged Parent is lingering to the grave with grey hairs and sorrow, under the late news of their last son slain in such a battle; many an helpless infant is thrown an orphan into the wide world by the fatal lead destigned to the Father's breast; while you my dear hearers (altho' you have often murmurred that ever you came to these inhospitable wilds, and was ready to say with the murmurring Jews, 'Has God brought us here to slay us?'), have been hedged about with the kind providence of God, and screened from the impending storm in this peaceable corner of the earth . . . . Yea, and above all, when they were thus wading through the terrible storm and we have been expecting soon to share the bitter cup, we have been blest with the greatest of all blessings, cultivated with the word and spirit of divine grace, many brought to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, and to drink of the wells of Salvation.[74]

Colonel Simeon Perkins, who heard this sermon, pronounced it "a very good discourse."[75] No doubt many others, less involved than he in profits from the war, felt even more strongly that this was the Gospel for Nova Scotia. Thousands gladly turned from the grim realities of their outward environment to find comfort and exhilarating self-expression in a revival of religion. In a state of divided loyalties, the neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia found psychological release in the en-

74 Henry Alline, *Sermon on a Day of Thanksgiving* (Halifax, 1783), 22-29.
75 Perkins, *Diary*, Nov. 21, 1782.

thusiasm of the Newlights, and compensated themselves for their political inaction by their zeal for spiritual regeneration.

SUMMARY

From the founding of Halifax to the outbreak of the American Revolution there were ten Congregational, four Presbyterian, and four Baptist churches organized in Nova Scotia.[76] While six of these appear to have been provided with clergymen from the beginning, the remaining twelve churches were without a regular ministry for a period of from six to ten years. At Barrington, Yarmouth, Maugerville, and perhaps Halifax, Cornwallis, and Sackville, student pastors from New England supplied the pulpits for short periods. The length of the pastorates of the regular ministry varied, but among the Congregational churches, five of the pastors remained with their charges less than three years. Situated in a new and isolated province; separated from one another by miles of pathless forest; suffering from a prolonged economic depression, the Dissenting churches of Nova Scotia found it impossible to support their ministers. In this regard the Presbyterians were more fortunate than their Congregational neighbors, but even their ministers suffered from the prevailing poverty. The demoralization and disintregation of organized religion begun during this period were accelerated by the emergence of sectarianism and the outbreak of war which plunged the struggling churches into a torrent of controversy and schism. A generation of frontier children who had never been to school and whose only religious instruction had been provided in their homes or through the exhortations of some local deacon or ruling elder had come of age. Were they in the words of the Cornwallis Memorial to "become Churchmen (Anglican) or nothing?"

It has often been observed that when a soft-wood forest is cut down, a new hard wood growth springs up in its place. In a similar manner the social conditions which left the Pre-Loyalist settlements of Nova Scotia destitute of adequate religious leadership resulted in a hardy growth of submerged religious elements of an entirely different kind. Concurrent with the American Revolution there sprang up among the stumps of the Congregational churches new and indigenous religious societies, with a native ministry of young men from the farms. Develop-

76 See Appendix at end of this chapter.

ing almost independently of outside ecclesiastical assistance, these societies were preeminently the expression of the religious needs and genius of the Nova Scotian frontier. Their emergence may be called "the Great Awakening in Nova Scotia."

Appendix to Chapter III

I. CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES AND MINISTERS, 1749-1776

Town	*Settled*	*Meeting House Built*	*Minister*	*Church Covenant*
1. Barrington	1761	1765-66	S. Wood, 1767-70 I. Knowles, 1771-72, 73 Mr. Stearns, 1772	.....
2. Cape Forchu	1761	1784	N. Porter, 1767-71 S. S. Poole, 1774 A. Bancroft, 1780-83.	Sept 2, 1767
3. Chebogue and Argyle[1]	1761	1766	S. Wood, 1761-67 J. Frost, 1767-70 J. Scott, 1770-93	Dec. 18, 1767
4. Chester	1761	.....	J. Seccombe, 1761-92	.....
5. Cornwallis[2]	1760	1767	B. Phelps, 1765-77	.....
6. Cumberland and Amherst	1763	.....	C. Gannett, 1768-71	.....
7. Granville and Annapolis	1760	1776	A. Morse, 1770-83	.....
8. Halifax	1749	1750	A. Cleaveland, 1750-54 J. Cotton, 1755 A. Brown, 1766 W. Moore, 1769-70	.....
9. Liverpool	1760	1774-75	I. Cheever, 1760-82	.....
10. Maugerville	1763	1775	Mr. Wellman, 1763-64 Z. Briggs, 1770 Mr. Webster S. Noble, 1774-77	1763-66

1 There was a Congregational Society at Argyle before 1766, but no church. Church members entered into covenant with the church at Jebogue. On his removal from Jebogue to Argyle in 1760, the Rev. John Frost conducted regular worship in the Argyle Society until his death in 1779.

2 There was a Congregational Society at Horton in the year 1766 when a Mr. Fuller preached. It was absorbed into the Presbyterian church under Rev. James Murdoch in the following year. Congregational societies also undoubtedly existed at Falmouth and Newport.

II. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES AND MINISTERS, 1749-1776.

	Town	Settled	Meeting House	Minister	Affiliation
1.	Horton	1760	c.1768	J. Murdoch, 1767-90	General Associate Synod, Ireland
2.	Londonderry	1761	.....	D. Smith, 1771-95	Associate Synod, Scotland
3.	Lunenburg	1753	1769	B. R. Comingoe, 1770-1820	Dutch Reformed
4.	Truro and Onslow	1760	.....	J. Lyon, 1765-1771	Synod of New York and Philadelphia[3]
				S. Kinloch, 1766	Associate Synod of Scotland
				D. Cock, 1772-98	.....

III. BAPTIST CHURCHES AND MINISTERS, 1749-1776[4]

	Town	Settled	Meeting House	Minister	Baptisms
1.	Cape Forchu	1761	.....	E. Moulton, 1761-62; 17....-73	one
2.	Horton	1760	1763(?)	E. Moulton, 1763-	several
3.	Newport	1760	.....	J. Sutton, 1766-69	several
4.	Sackville	1763	.....	N. Mason, 1763-71	about forty-five
				J. Reed	
				N. Rounds (?)	
				Mr. Windsor	

3 The Rev. James Lyon seems never to have settled in one place, but was associated with Truro, Onslow, and Pictou.

4 It should be noted that all these Baptist churches, with the possible exception of Sackville, practiced mixed communion. The Rev. N. Rounds may have conducted Baptist services in Annapolis County in 1769, but there is no record of an organization. All these early Baptist churches disappeared before the Revolution.

CHAPTER FOUR

HENRY ALLINE

"The Apostle of Nova Scotia"

EARLY LIFE

The genius and focus of the Great Awakening in Nova Scotia was Henry Alline, who was born at Newport, Rhode Island, June 14, 1748, the son of William and Rebecca Alline of Boston.[1] At the age of twelve he moved with his parents to Falmouth, Nova Scotia, as members of the Rhode Island emigration to that place. There amid the rude surroundings of the new settlement he lived a troubled and psychologically disturbed life, fearful of death from falling trees, from lightning, or from prowling Indians. At night he lay awake trembling at the sound of the cattle moving in the stable, or the barking of a dog in the yard.[2]

To this physical fear there was added the fear of hell, inspired by the stern Calvinistic doctrines of election and the last judgment applied in their crudest form. There was no resident minister in Falmouth, and the little religious instruction the boy received in the home, or at the private meetings conducted by laymen, served only to increase his apprehension, and to bind more firmly upon his troubled conscience the hopelessness of his case.[3] Probably his case was not unique, and it is likely that hundreds of young people throughout the province were driven to a like state of melancholy and self-condemnation by the same cruel teachings. The ghost of Puritanism was always lurking in the marginal consciousness of this generation and condemning all their frolics and amusements as "carnal mirth." "Often, while on the floor in my dance," wrote Henry Alline, "I could hardly contain myself . . . with such dreadful views of the gulph of perdition beneath my feet, and the danger of being cut off and dropping into an irrevocable state. . . . Sometimes, I would leave the company, and go out and walk about crying and praying, as if my very heart would break, and beseeching God, that

1 The source for the material in this chapter is the now rare, *Life and Journal of the Rev. Mr. Henry Alline* (Boston, 1806), hereafter referred to as *Journal.*
2 *Ibid.*, 7, 14.
3 *Ibid.*, 8.

he would not cut me off."[4] This is not a familiar conception of a frontiersman, but from the rapidity with which religious revivals spread, on both the Canadian and American frontiers later on, it is probable that such crying and praying in the fields was not an unique occurrence.

Henry Alline was unique, however, in that he possessed an unusually developed imagination and a capacity for abstract speculation. He had what William James called "a strongly developed ultra-marginal life,"[5] so that sets of memories, thoughts, and feelings which were not present in the actual field of consciousness, nevertheless made themselves known by unmistakable signs. Such extended regions of mental activity have been the distinguishing marks of the mystics in all ages.[6] Henry Alline may properly be considered as both a mystic and a speculative theologian.

At mid-adolescence he began "to pursue the hidden mystery." Just what books were available for such study, in this new colony, it is hard to imagine. Alline himself does not mention the names of any, and in his theological writings rarely acknowledges the authors to whom he is indebted for his ideas. Those whom he quotes by name are, John Fletcher, John Milton, William Law, Martin Luther, William Dell, Increase Mather, Samuel Mather, "Dr. Taylor," "Dr. Stillingfleet," John Bunyan, and the poets, Alexander Pope, John Pomfret, Edward Young, and Isaac Watts.[7] Many of these he read, no doubt, during his later travels, but some of them may have been available in his boyhood home. Most of them merely supplied him with arguments on the nature of the church and the ministry, or fortified his prejudices against Calvinistic dogma. Others, however, and especially William Law, brought him into contact with that strange current of theosophy and mysticism which flowed from Jacob Boehme, "the Teutonic Philosopher."[8]

From the time that he left New England, at twelve years of age, Henry Alline had no opportunity to attend school. Alone, with only the conversation of his neighbors, and the possible help

4 *Ibid.*, 15.

5 William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York, 1916), 217ff. contains discussion of Alline's case.

6 R. M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1919), xxvi.

7 Henry Alline, *Two Mites Cast into the Offering of God for the Benefit of Mankind* (Dover, N. H., 1804), 2, 3, 11, 29, 33, 37, 63, 64, 111, 149, 154, 186. 191, 194, 205, 218.

8 See below page 94.

of some of the books mentioned above, he "dove for the bottomless ocean," spending hours poring over "the unknown mystery of eternity," trying to discover "the consistency of an endless duration and the nature of it . . . how it was that eternity was in itself a duration without beginning or end."[9]

> I would stretch my conceptions, grasp a repeated multiplicity of years and millions of ages in futurity, soaring into the infinite ocean, until I was almost racked to despair . . . . All the conception I attained to at last was to find myself a mystery of unhappy existence, between two inconceivable eternities, or as an inextinguishable spark of life hanging over or fluctuating in an infinite, unbounded abyss or bottomless ocean.[10]

Continued wrestling with these insoluble metaphysical problems, and constant moral conflict, eventually resulted in a state of melancholy and exhaustion. About his twenty-fourth year he began to experience certain well-known trance phenomena such as auditions and photism.[11] Walking alone through the fields at dusk, he was conscious of an uncommon light, "like a blaze of fire," and saw "thousands of devils and damned spirits" waiting to torment his lost and saviorless soul.[12] On another night, as he lay in his bed, he saw "a small body of light as plainly as possible," while a "still small voice" spoke through his very soul.[13]

Psychologists have long recognized such experiences as the manifestation of subconscious desires, feelings, and ideas striving to take the lead and to produce that unification of the ego which conscious volition has been unable to establish. When the will becomes so exhausted in its conflict with fear, environment, and tradition that it can struggle no longer, the subliminal and unconscious forces take charge with startling effect. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* William James has shown how this happened in the case of "poor Henry Alline."[14] The subject's own description of the event is even more memorable and dramatic.

> And now I began to be stripped and saw that I had done nothing, and never could do anything . . . . I saw that I could neither extricate myself out of my lost, undone condition, nor recommend myself to God by any-

9 *Journal,* 9.
10 *Ibid.,* 10.
11 Cf., J. H. Leuba, *The Psychology of Religious Mysticism* (London, 1925), 255ff.
12 *Journal,* 21.
13 *Ibid.,* 26.
14 James, *Varieties,* 159, 217ff.

thing I had done or ever could do if I were to live a thousand years, and I appeared further from conversion than ever . . . . In the house, confused and groaning, suddenly I saw an old Bible on the chair. I caught hold of it in great haste; and opening it without any premeditation, cast my eyes on the 38th Psalm, which was the first time I ever saw the word of God. It took hold of me with such power that it seemed to go through my whole soul, and read therein every thought of my heart, and raised my whole soul with groans and earnest cries to God, so that it seemed as if God was praying in, with, and for me. . .

'O help me, help me, cried I, thou Redeemer of souls, and save me or I am gone forever': and the last word I ever mentioned in my distress (for the change was instantaneous) was, 'O Lord Jesus Christ, thou canst this night, if thou pleasest, with one drop of thy blood atone for my sins, and appease the wrath of an angry God.' . . . . At that instant of time when I gave up all to him to do with me, as he pleased, and was willing God should reign in me and ride over me at his pleasure; redeeming love broke into my soul with repeated scriptures with such power, that my whole soul seemed to be melted down with love; the burden of guilt and condemnation was gone; darkness was expelled, my heart humbled and filled with gratitude, and my will turned of choice after the infinite God, whom I saw I had rebelled against and been deserting from all my days. . . . My whole soul, that was a few minutes ago groaning under mountains of death, wading through storms of sorrow, racked with distressing fears, and crying to an unknown God for help, was now filled with immortal love, soaring on the wings of faith, freed from the chains of death and darkness, and crying out 'My Lord, and My God. . . .'[15]

It will be seen that the key to this remarkable conversion experience was the final collapse of all volitional effort on the part of Alline to assert or excuse himself. Beaten and bewildered by the fierceness of the moral struggle within him, all further effort seemed hopeless and in vain, then, suddenly, it was that he felt himself overwhelmed and possessed by a power greater and mightier than himself.[16] Henceforth, that became the criterion and method of all religious reality for him. Men must cease trying to cover themselves with "the filthy rags of their own righteousness," and depend entirely upon the power of God. This conclusion was not new. It is a commonplace of experimental religion, of which Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is the immortal example. From the time of the Great Awakening of 1740, it had been a familiar experience, especially among

15 *Journal* 32-35.

16 It is customary for religious psychologists to explain such conversion experiences in terms of the release of subliminal forces, but it should be pointed out that there is no way of distinguishing between such forces and those other wider forces of life which are both within and beyond the personality, and that the validity of Henry Alline's own interpretation of his experience is neither excluded nor annulled.

the Newlights and Baptists in New England. With Henry Alline, however, it was a spontaneous and personal occurrence, unaccounted for by any previous religious movements in the community. From that moment of rebirth on March 26, 1775, he felt himself called to preach this way of salvation, and revive the dying churches of Nova Scotia.

> In the midst of all my joys, in less than half an hour after my soul was set at liberty, the Lord discovered to me my labor in the ministry and call to preach the gospel. I cried out, 'Amen, Lord. I'll go, I'll go, send me, send me.' . . . . It was so clear to me, that I had not the least doubt but I should preach the gospel; altho' to all appearances in the sight of man, there was none appeared more unlikely: for my capacity in the world was low, being obliged to labor daily with my hands to get a living.[17]

One great obstacle stood in the way of the fulfillment of this commission, his lack of education. So new was his situation to him, that he could not see how he could preach until he had received the usual theological training for the ministry. It was only after many months of hesitation and a fruitless attempt to reach Boston, that this last shred of dependence upon human wisdom was at last discarded. By a new upsurge of suppressed ideas, his outward fears and questionings were overcome, and his difficulty solved. "One day in my meditation," he wrote, "I had such a discovery of Christ's having everything I needed, and that it was all mine, that I saw I needed nothing to qualify me but Christ." The result was that on April 18, 1776, a day set aside by the provincial government as a public fast, he "came out and spoke by way of exhortation."[18]

THE FORMING OF THE NEWLIGHT CHURCHES

(1) NEWPORT

News that Henry Alline "was turned a New Light" soon spread throughout the countryside. It had a marked effect upon the young people among whom he had been a natural leader. As in the case of the former generation in Northampton, Massachusetts, "Frolicking ceased and many began to be somewhat thoughtful."[19] Whole boat-loads of people from the surrounding country and even from other towns came to hear him preach. In July, he was invited to speak at the house of Joseph Bailey

17 *Ibid.*, 36.
18 *Ibid.*, 46.
19 *Journal* 40. Cf., Jonathan Edwards, "Narrative of Surprising Conversions," *Works*, III, 232.

in the adjoining town of Newport. There his hearers "seemed to be struck with awe," and some of the "Christians" gave him "the hand of fellowship." Two months later, on September 27, 1776, "a visible church, to walk in the order of the Gospel," was gathered at Newport.[20] The Great Awakening in Nova Scotia had begun.

The Newport church was formed of the remnants of the Rev. James Sutton's Baptist society, and such "Congregationals" as shared Alline's doctrines of grace. This mixed membership, which was to have far-reaching results on future events, was typical of Alline's repudiation of all outward props to religion, and his emphasis on inward light and experience. "We did not think," he wrote, "that such small non-essentials, as different opinions about water Baptism, were sufficient to break any fellowship, and to obstruct building together among the true citizens of Zion; and the Lord owned and answered us, and blessed us by increasing the gifts, graces, and numbers of the small, feeble band. But the powers of darkness and the church of anti-christ arose against it from every quarter, both in public and private." Naturally, the other churches in the nearby towns were looked upon as having "only a dry form without religion," and therefore were not asked to assist in the formation of this new body, or in the ordination of elders which took place a month later. Alline preached to the church when he was in Newport. In his absence, the elders "came forward to lead the church, as far as their gifts and graces extended." One of these, Daniel Dimock, was given authority by the church to baptize.[21]

During the winter of 1776-1777, Alline visited the townships of Horton and Cornwallis, and in May, 1777, pressed on into Annapolis County. Two extracts from his *Journal* will suffice to show what occurred on every hand.

> I then went to Falmouth and preached in many different places, (houses), and the Lord was with me. We had blessed days: for the Lord was reviving his work of grace. Many under a load of sin cried out, what shall we do to be saved? and the saints seemed much revived, came out and witnessed for God. In a short time some more souls were born to Christ, they came out, and declared what God had done for their souls. O what a blessed change had taken place in that town.
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> . . . .

20 *Journal*, 48. Alline constantly refers to those who, like himself, had passed through a conversion experience as "Christians."

21 E. M. Saunders, *History of the Baptists of the Maritime Provinces* (Halifax, 1902), 480.

Many were very much awakened: which was such a new thing (neither known nor heard of among them), that many did not know what ailed them . . . . for there had never been such a talk as a guilty conscience, a burthened mind, a hard heart, or a stubborn will, or about any convictions, or any conversions; nor of the love of God, or declaring what he had done for their souls; but only if any one had (as they say), a desire to be religious, or had lost some relation by death . . . they go to the minister and he advises them to join the church.[22]

It was this personal, vital aspect of the new religion which caused it to sweep all before it. The older churches had nothing to offer which could compete with it. Nor could their staid and sometimes bibulous clergymen compete with this fervent and energetic young evangelist who preached every day of the week, and often more than once in a day, a gospel which warmed men's hearts and stirred their deepest emotions. Even apart from the contagion which the excitement of the revival produced among an isolated and emotionally-starved people, the older churches were completely out-maneuvered by the recklessness with which their opponent spent himself. An old tradition in Nova Scotia pictures Alline as always riding a splendid horse, and "with loaded whip" passing at a rapid canter from place to place, "pausing only to proclaim, where opportunity offered, trumpet-toned, the Gospel of the Grace of God."[23]

In the summer of 1777 an attempt was made "to dash" the Newlight by a hastily summoned "presbytery" at Cornwallis, attended by the two Burgher ministers, David Smith and Daniel Cock. A heated debate took place. Alline refused to admit that the power of ordination was confined to "a society of ministers," and refused an offer to study with them for six months "upon Free Cost."[24] The meeting broke up with both sides strengthened in their prejudices. The Scottish ministers retired across Minas Basin, and enthusiasm ran rampant in Horton and Cornwallis. "A great number met almost every evening and continued until eleven and twelve o'clock at night, praying, exhorting, singing, some of them telling what God had done for their souls, and some groaning under a load of sin."[25]

(2) CORNWALLIS

The Congregational church in Cornwallis had been a divid-

22 *Journal*, 49, 149.
23 I. E. Bill, *Fifty Years with the Baptists* (St. John, 1880), 13.
24 *Journal*, 55-56; Scott, *Brief View*, 112.
25 *Journal*, 57.

ed body from the beginning. The Rev. Benaiah Phelps had never succeeded in reconciling the strict Congregational elements which disapproved of the methods of the elders, and now his rebel sympathies lost him the support of the more conservative section of his congregation. With no possibility in sight of collecting the arrears in his salary, he determined to sell the glebe lands which had been granted to him in virtue of his office as first minister of the town. The resulting commotion was so great that Mr. Phelps was dismissed, and after some months returned to Connecticut, towards the end of the year 1777.[26]

On July 15, 1778, thirteen men of Cornwallis and Horton entered into a covenant relation of Christian fellowship together and formed a Separate Newlight Church.[27] They were soon joined by about one half of the membership of the First Church of Cornwallis. Enthusiasm ran high; "the Christians seemed alarmed, some sinners awakened and crying out after a Saviour, and some that had been awakened and gone back were again alarmed." Alline found them "all very lively in religion."[28] In his absence they conducted their own services in a schoolhouse near Hamilton's Corner, or in private houses and barns.[29]

THE HORTON BAPTIST CHURCH

At both Cornwallis and Horton there was present from the beginning a considerable Baptist element. These had been organized into a church in 1762 by the Rev. Ebenezer Moulton,[30] but since then had been absorbed into the Congregational churches. With the spread of the revival, these submerged Baptist elements began to reappear. Henry Alline received a warm welcome from them and "saw the goings of God in his sanctuary." Some of the Baptists, however, insisted upon the importance of immersion as the mark of a Christian, and objected to the Newlight tendency to belittle it, and to practice mixed communion.

On October 29, 1778, a meeting was held for the purpose of forming a Baptist church. It was discovered, however, that only five of those present had actually been immersed, and it was agreed that "According to light that we have therein, the least

26 Eaton, *Kings County*, 273.
27 Minutes of the Newlight Church of Cornwallis, printed in Saunders, *History of the Baptists*, 130 ff.
28 *Journal*, 59; 63.
29 Eaton, *Kings County*, 288.
30 *Ibid.*, 304.

ought to be seven, to act as a Church, to choose and ordain officers, and we were afraid to proceed lest, that we take any imprudent steps, for fear we should cause the adversaries to triumph over us."[31] This difficulty was overcome when five additional members were baptized. The church then proceeded to elect its officers. Nicholas Pierson, an English Baptist, was chosen to be pastor, and Benjamin Kinsman, Jr., deacon and clerk. Henry Alline disapproved of this move, foreseeing the controversy it was likely to project into an already chaotic religious situation. "O may the time come," he exclaimed, "when Ephraim shall no longer vex Judah, nor Judah envy Ephraim, and there might never more be any disputes about such non-essentials as water-baptism: the sprinkling of infants or baptizing of adults by immersion: but everyone enjoy liberty of conscience."[32] His wishes, however, were in vain; the Horton Baptists proved themselves both tenacious in holding, and aggressive in propagating, their peculiar tenets. Alline and delegates from his Newlight churches were invited to assist at the ordination of Nicholas Pierson on November 5, 1778, but were not allowed to lay their hands upon his head. This was done by Benjamin Kinsman, the deacon, who also gave the charge to the new minister. Mr. Pierson then in turn ordained Kinsman a deacon, and gave him a solemn charge.[33] Within three months "The Congregational Church of Christ . . . in Cornwallis requested Sisterly Fellowship and Communion with the Baptist Church in Horton and Cornwallis, but was by said Baptist Church denied and refused."[34] During the following year the Baptists doubled their church membership, but Henry Alline himself was denied admission to the Lord's table by them, as an unbaptized person.[35] Thus began the Baptist church of the Maritime Provinces, and also the baptismal controversy which was to wrack the religious life of those provinces for the next forty years.

To Alline, this new emphasis on water-baptism was a return to dependence on external means of salvation. "As fallen Adam, to hide his guilt and shame, attempted to cover himself with

31 "Minutes of Horton Baptist Church," in S. W. DeBlois, *Historical Sketch of First Horton Baptist Church* (Halifax, 1878), 7.
32 *Journal*, 67.
33 DeBlois, *Horton Baptist Church*, 7-8. Alline felt that Mr. Pierson "was not endowed with a great gift in the word." *Journal*, 67.
34 *Minutes of Newlight Church of Cornwallis*, Jan. 31, 1779.
35 Scott, *Brief View*, 282.

fig-leaves, so all his sons being of the same spirit, too often take the same ineffectual method to obtain shelter for their guilty souls." It is only when true inward religion grows cold, he said, that Christians are willing to spend hours "discoursing about those things which would never be of service to body or soul, and proving the vitality of their own methods or forms of some external matters, and condemn others who do not think as they do." Circumstantial differences in the external observations of religion, such as sects and denominations, or the various forms of baptism "ought to be no more bar in uniting, building and communing together at the Lord's table, and all other gospel privileges, than the differences of their voices and looks." Let each man, therefore, follow his own conscience and "don't spend too much time disputing about it . . . For it is all but a non-essential matter of no more importance than it does good."[36]

"Here," in the words of Jonathan Scott, "is a Conclusion bold enough for a mortal Worm to draw up concerning one of the holy Institutions of God."[37] Even the Newlights at Cornwallis were disconcerted by the vehemence of their leader's attack and debated the question with him in a church meeting with a view to censoring him. Finally, on November 28, 1780, a council of churches was held at Horton "to settle matters in dispute, to heal breaches and make up divisions." As a result, the Horton Baptists voted to permit "the Congregational brethren which are sound in faith, to sit down with us at the Lord's Table occasionally, and that the mode of baptism be no bar to communion."[38] The victory for liberty of conscience, however, was more apparent than real. The deep-seated convictions remained unchanged on either side and, together with the questions of ordination and itinerancy, were destined to trouble and divide the churches of Nova Scotia for many years.

THE ORDINATION OF HENRY ALLINE

Ordination, like baptism, appeared to Henry Alline to be but an outward form. From the beginning of his ministry, however, he found himself hampered by the wide-spread feeling that a preacher must be ordained. It was also asserted that it was "next to impossible for a man to be called to preach, who had no

36 *Two Mites*, 171 ff. *Journal*, 84.
37 Scott, *Brief View*, 132.
38 De Blois, *First Horton Baptist Church*, 8; *Journal*, 97.

college learning."[39] On the other hand, there were many, trained in the tenets of the New England Separates, who despised education and, in language reminiscent of Whitefield and Tennent, insisted upon the importance of a converted ministry. Both from religious conviction and personal necessity, Alline found himself in agreement with this latter group. He was deeply conscious of his educational deficiencies. Evidences of an inward struggle between his determination to depend absolutely upon God for every qualification for his ministry and his tendency to prize and lean upon the approval of men are not lacking in his *Journal* for these months. There is a note of melancholy and foreboding which is not present in the earlier pages after his conversion. He searches his soul for hidden sins in order to account for the loss of the inner peace and happiness he had once enjoyed.[40]

Alline's own arguments concerning ordination are to be found in the five chapters of his *Two Mites* which he devotes to the subject. Natural gifts, with all the assistance of man, will not make a Man of God. It is as evident that an unconverted man cannot preach the gospel as that darkness cannot give light; or ice make a man warm. Such ministers are not true men of God at all; therefore, how can they maintain that they alone have the power to ordain? "When our Lord speaks of ministers coming in at the right door, he doth not say that the colleges, universities, bishops, priests or presbyteries are the way or the door." The power of ordination, like all the other prerogatives of church government, belongs to the brotherhood and not to a special class. It should ordinarily be used with the aid and advice of other Christian churches, but if the only churches within reach are those who "hold to the forms of godliness, without the power thereof," then Christians should act alone.[41]

Such arguments were accepted by Congregationalists generally, but Henry Alline's difficulties were aggravated by the fact that while he was willing to receive ordination from the brethren, he was not willing to confine his preaching to one church or parish, as Congregational custom demanded. After much discussion, therefore, it was finally agreed that he should accept a call from the church of Falmouth and Newport, but that he should be set apart or ordained "an Itinerant or Traveling

39 *Ibid.*, 55.
40 *Ibid.*, 60, 86, 96.
41 *Two Mites*, 122 ff.

Pastor and Teacher to Preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Administer the Ordinances in Christ-Churches wherever the Lord our God in his Providence shall call him there unto, . . . which is according to the best light and knowledge we have at present."[42]

Such a course was entirely contrary to traditional New England practice. "There is no church on earth," cried the Rev. Jonathan Scott, "that has any natural or divine right to elect or constitute officers for another church without their own consent." He could see no reason why he should have to stand aside in his church in Jebogue while his little flock was disrupted by the "disorderly practices and wild enthusiasm of one whom the Anabaptist Christians at Horton, have been concerned in approbating as an Itinerant Preacher."[43] To Henry Alline, as to John Wesley on the other side of the Atlantic, the need created the parish. He felt obliged to visit the neighboring towns, where precious and immortal souls looked to hireling shepherds for food, and were not fed. Accordingly, on April 5, 1779, delegates from the Newlight churches of Cornwallis, and Falmouth-Newport, and of the Baptist Church of Horton, met together for a day of fasting and prayer. The following morning, in a large barn at Falmouth, "after prayer and singing and a sermon preached," nine delegates, three from each of the churches, laid their hands upon Henry Alline's head, and ordained him to the officer of Pastor and Teacher.[44] A certificate containing the simple statement, "We have ordained Mr. Henry Alline an Itinerant Preacher," was signed by Abner Hall, Schoolmaster, Benjamin Kinsman and Isaac Biglow of Cornwallis; Nicholas Pierson, pastor and Peter Bishop and Benjamin Kinsman, Jr., deacons of Horton; and Daniel Dimock of Newport.[45] Armed with this simple document, the "anti-traditionist" set out to visit townships which were as yet untouched by the revival.

(3) MAUGERVILLE

On April 25, 1779, Alline crossed the Bay of Fundy in a

42 This decision was reached at a meeting of the Cornwallis Church, Dec. 21, 1778, and seems to have been the basis for the action of the ordination council at Falmouth four months later. The minutes of the meeting are printed in Saunders, *History of the Baptists*, 130.

43 Scott, *Brief View*, 280 ff.

44 *Journal*, 70.

45 This information is supplied by Scott who had seen the certificate but could not recall the names of the other signators. *Brief View*, 269.

vessel from Cornwallis and ascended the River Saint John as far as Maugerville. He found the church in a "broken state," much divided because of the recent political activities of Pastor Noble and several of the leading members of the church.[46] These had now fled from the country, but further discord over the question of conversion continued to disrupt the congregation. Signs of revival soon began to appear. The manifestations were both physical and spiritual. "Some Christians much revived shouted forth the Redeemer's praise, and some sinners were brought under conviction. . . . The work of God was still increasing; souls crying out what shall they do to be saved; and Christians enjoying great discoveries of divine truth."[47]

On June 17, 1779, those of the Maugerville church who favored the revival renewed their church covenant. "The neglect of a close walk with God and a watchfulness over our brother," were singled out as the "provoking causes of the division and calamity" that had previously befallen them. And although they were "awfully sensible that it is a dreadful thing for sinful dust and ashes personally to transact with the infinitely glorious majesty of Heaven and earth," nevertheless, they renewed their old covenant, and prayed for grace "to reform those evils or whatsoever evils have provoked the eyes of God's glory among us."[48]

Three months later Alline visited the St. John River a second time and assisted the church to choose two elders and two deacons. Like the other Newlight churches he had organized, this one now extended to him a call to settle among them as their pastor. He replied in a formal letter promising to make them the people of his "particular care while present," and to charge his memory with them while absent; but "leaving it to the great Ruler of all things to determine how long or how often" he should be with them.[49] A third church was thus added to the Newlight group which looked upon Henry Alline as their "Pastor and

46 Cf. "Documents of the Maugerville Church," *N.B.H.S.*, I, 77-78.

47 *Journal*, 71-72.

48 "Documents of the Maugerville Church," 124. Renewing the covenant was familiar New England practice after the Reforming Synod of 1679. Cf. The Result of Synod, VIII-X, W. Walker, *Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism* (New York, 1893), 435 ff.

49 Letter to Maugerville church, *Journal*, 77-78. The remnant of the old Congregational church of Maugerville wrote four letters to the church at Jebogue asking them to "take into Consideration the distressed State and mournful Condition of this Church, on Account of Division and Separations," Cf., *Jebogue Records*, 114 ff.

Teacher." The affection with which he was regarded by his converts, as well as an impression of the highly wrought emotionalism he produced, are revealed in the account of his departure from the St. John Valley.

> October 31, (1779), After preaching two sermons I bid them farewell to go down the river, promising to see them if God permitted. Preached in different places as I went down the river, and saw the power of God among sinners. Some groaning under a load of sin, and some come out rejoicing in God their Saviour. Some children of ten to thirteen years of age crying out, "Where, where shall I fly, that I might get rid of my sins, darkness and death, that I might love God with all my soul."
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> . . . . . .
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> Much company went with me from place to place, sometimes six or seven boats loaded with people.[50]

(4) ANNAPOLIS

During the fall and winter of 1779-80, Alline travelled untiringly, on horseback and on snowshoes, through forest and blizzard. The revival in Annapolis County was at its height. Many a night he sat up until two or three o'clock "laboring with distressed souls."[51] At Granville, where the Congregational church of the Rev. Arzarelah Morse had been disrupted as early as May, 1777, a fourth Newlight church was formed in March, 1780. This church included in its membership both Congregationalists and Baptists, and one of the articles of its covenant declared that differences of opinion concerning "water-baptism" were not considered to be a sufficient bar to church membership, and that each one was to enjoy full liberty of conscience on that question.[52] The members of this church were scattered throughout the townships of Granville, Annapolis, and Wilmot. A meeting-house was erected on the south side of the Annapolis River at Centerlea, about the year 1780. A second was built on the north side of the river, at Hicks's Ferry (Bridgetown), some four years later. Preaching services were also held at Lower Granville, and Wilmot.[53] Thomas Handley Chipman, one of Alline's converts, but a Baptist, was chosen to minister to the new churches. Under his earnest exhortations enthusiasm continued to increase in Annapolis County.

50 *Journal*, 78 and 83.
51 *Ibid.*, 74.
52 *Journal*, 82: Cf. also Letter from Cornwallis church "To the Church of Christ Lately Embodied in Wilmot, Granvel & Annapolis, etc.," July 5, 1780, printed in Saunders, *History of The Baptists*, 131.
53 Calneck and Savary, *History of Annapolis County*, 303.

THE CUMBERLAND METHODISTS. (5) CUMBERLAND

In the Spring of 1781, following the apparent truce with the Baptists, Henry Alline came into contact for the first time with the followers of John Wesley. These were Yorkshire farmers who had purchased lands from the original New England grantees on the Isthmus of Chignecto. As the English Wesleyans had not yet separated from the Church of England, these people were members of the Established Church under the pastorate of the Rev. John Eagleston. They continued, however, to hold private meetings of their own, singing and praying together, and hearing such exhortations as their humble leaders could provide. Under these unauspicious circumstances, in the Spring of 1779, conversions began to occur. Soon, without any outside assistance or ministerial help of any kind, a real Wesleyan revival, with all its accompanying outcries and emotional excitement, was in progress. This was the beginning of Methodism in the Dominion of Canada.[54]

The domestic aspect of this revival is admirably illustrated in a letter written by William Black, then nineteen years of age, to the Rev. John Wesley, who gave it a place in his *Journal.* In the Spring of 1779, he had gone to a prayer meeting at a neighboring farm. "While they were praying, my heart began to throb within me, my eyes gushed out with tears, and I cried aloud for mercy; as did most that were in the room, about fourteen in number." A few weeks later, at a similar meeting, while they were singing a hymn, his conversion was completed. That same night, rising from his bed in the middle of the night, he succeeded in "setting at liberty," one after the other, the souls of his two brothers, his father, and his sister. Not long after, a neighbor's son came to the Black farm, and as he talked with William, "the Lord laid his hand on him in a wonderful manner; so that he rolled up and down, and roared as in the agonies of death. But between one and two in the morning, he likewise could rejoice in God his Saviour."[55]

Essentially, the religion of the Methodists and that of the New Lights was the same. Both were, at the time, classed as "enthusiasts." They both emphasized the vital necessity of a

54 T. W. Smith, *History of Methodism in Eastern British America* (Halifax, 1877), I, 84 ff.
55 John Wesley, *Journal,* Nehemiah Curnock, ed. (London, 1910-1916), VI, 349-350.
56 Matthew Richey, *A Memoir of William Black* (Halifax, 1839), 20.

new birth, and of inward experience of the power and presence of God, in contrast to the formalism and externalism of the Established churches. They also shared a Pietistic and Puritan attitude to worldly pleasures, and conceived of the church as a community of holy men. Both were democratic, in that they gave a large place to self-expression and lay participation in their meetings. They thus appealed to the independence and individualism of the frontiersman. The Methodists, however, had certain advantages over the followers of Alline.

Even before the news of the unexpected fruition of his labors in a far land had reached John Wesley, steps had been taken by the Cumberland converts to organize themselves into classes, according to the Methodist practice with which they had been familiar in England. Small groups met regularly at private homes for self-examination and prayer. Once a month a larger meeting was held, when the classes combined for a day of spiritual exercise, or for a love-feast. There were also quarterly meetings where the business of the society was conducted. Four zealous young men, Scurr, Wells, Fawkender, and Black, initiated an adaptation of the familiar Wesleyan circuit system, visiting in turn the settlements of Prospect, Fort Lawrence, and Amherst. Thus the main elements of Methodist discipline, the class and the circuit, were set up in Nova Scotia by the year 1780. It was this well-tried and closely-knit system which from the beginning welded the Methodists into a corporate unity, and enabled them to withstand the disintegrating forces which wrought havoc among the undisciplined Newlight Congregationalists.

John Wesley had long before warned his disciples of the dangers of mysticism. "All the other enemies of Christianity are triflers; the mystics are the most dangerous of its enemies. They stab it in the vitals."[57] Now the infant society in far off Nova Scotia was called upon to test the validity of this judgment in a bout with the mystical Henry Alline.

The Newlight preacher arrived in Cumberland County early in July, 1781. He was received with joy by the Methodists. The coming of a minister who understood and preached experimental religion seemed to them, in their isolated and pastorless condition, like an act of Providence. No house was large enough

57 Wesley, *Journal*, I, 420.

to contain the crowds who came to hear him, so he resorted to the fields where "the people thronged with hungry souls to hear the word."[58] In a triumphant progress he toured the settlements on the Isthmus of Chignecto, and even visited the remote settlers along the Petitcodiac. Religious enthusiasm mounted high. Meetings continued all night long, with sinners roaring for mercy, praying and praising God with loud voices in the houses and along the roads. There were many remarkable instances of conversion as the revival swept through the settlements. Alline himself was deeply affected by the emotionally charged atmosphere. He found it more and more difficult to control his own feelings as his subconscious mind reacted sympathetically to the groans and outcries of his audiences. His "ravishment" only added to the general air of excitement and expectancy.

On August 12, 1781, less than a month after his arrival in the county, a church was formed, "without any bars or separation about different sects or denominations." About one hundred and thirty persons who "loved . . . Christ and belonged to him, were freely received into full communion."[59] The Methodist class meetings were kept up in the new church, and for a time it appears that William Black and the other class leaders did not recognize anything amiss, but regarded the church as the natural embodiment and expression of the evangelical forces in the community. Shortly after his departure from the county, however, Alline sent Thomas Handley Chipman to Cumberland. This zealous enthusiast let loose "a flood of antinomianism, mingled with mysticism."[60] The Methodist leaders in the church recognized the peril; Brother Chipman departed for Annapolis, but left behind him a heritage of doctrinal and sacramental controversies.

THE STRUGGLE AT CHEBOGUE

Flushed with success, Alline, in the meantime, had determined to visit the fishing settlements in the southwestern extremity of the province. On Sunday, October 21, 1781, the Rev. Jonathan Scott, the doughty and much-tried champion of New England Congregationalism, looking out over the congregation gathered for morning worship in the meeting house at

58 *Journal*, 135.
59 *Ibid.*, 138, 140; Richey, *William Black*, 44.
60 *Ibid.*, 44 ff.

Chebogue, was startled to recognize the dreaded "Ravager of the Churches" among his hearers.

The ensuing struggle between the Old Light and the New was bitter. Scott argued and fumed, and tried to prevent his people from hearing the itinerant. They, on their part, resented his interference, crowded to hear the notorious visitor, and like their brethren in the other towns, were captivated by his eloquence and personality.

A minute account of the struggle at Chebogue has been preserved by Scott himself in the *Records of the Church of Jebogue* and also in his *A Brief View of the Religious Tenets and Sentiments Lately Published and Spread in the Province of Nova Scotia;* the latter written expressly to expose Alline's erroneous doctrines and disorderly practices. From these it is possible to obtain a clear, if rather one-sided, picture of the methods of the itinerant in other congregations.[61]

In all, Alline paid three visits to Chebogue. From the beginning he held religious meetings at private houses during the week, both by day and by night. As they went from house to house, his followers "exercised themselves by singing aloud . . . in the Night, in the Highway." The standing minister was consistently criticized and belittled as "an Opposer of the Work of God." Soon conversions began to occur, and "a considerable Number were religiously impress'd, and became very zealous and fervent, and warm in caressing and applauding Mr. Alline; and proportionably cold, shy, and disaffected towards Mr. Scott." A separate meeting was set up, at first simply for "Prayer and Conference on Week-Days," but later also for Sunday services, and the people were advised "not to go to the Meeting-house, lest they should lose their Convictions, and so never obtain Mercy."

Mr. Scott, in his counter-attack, showed considerable bad temper, and assailed Alline as one who had broken through "all the Restraints of Decency and good Manners, or never were acquainted with them." At first he tried to persuade his people that Alline's doctrines as published in *Two Mites on Some of the most important and much disputed Points of Divinity, etc.*, were designed "to overthrow and destroy the Doctrines of Calvinism, Root and Branch." The people, however, remained indifferent to

61 M. W. Armstrong "Jonathan Scott's 'Brief View,'" *Harvard Theological Review,* XL (Apr. 1947), 121-136.

this theological danger, and rather took the attitude that "It was no Matter of any great Consequence . . . what a Man's Principles were, if he was but earnest in promoting a good Work." Similarly, Scott's objections to Alline on the ground of calling a religious meeting in his parish without his consent, and of high impropriety in holding night meetings at all, aroused but slight response among his church members. The conventions and ecclesiastical rules of New England had lost their authority, and no longer awed or hindered this frontier democracy. Scott was beaten from the start in his attempt to uphold the rights and privileges of the ministry. As he sorrowfully records,

> . . . to the Pastor's Face, they rejected all his Reasonings with Indignation and Contempt. They tell the Pastor without any Ceremony or Hesitation . . . . That they would go to hear any Minister that come . . . . If this was a Fault, the whole World was in it, ... This was restraining and infringing upon their Christian Liberty. . . . That no One should hinder them of their Christian Liberty . . . . That they would not be tied up to hear one Man . . . . That they would go to hear a Roman Catholick, &c.[62]

The cherished Order of the Gospel in the Churches of Christ was obviously shattered and New England Congregationalism disintegrating into individualism in Nova Scotia. "Look," wrote the aggrieved pastor, at the close of a sermon on church order which his congregation refused to let him preach, "Look, wherever you see the Hedge and Bulwarks of divine Order broke down from about any Church or professing People, you may write Ichabod there, the Glory is departed."[63]

The schism in the church at Chebogue was permanent. During Alline's third visit to Yarmouth, in October, 1782, about twenty families were included in the separation. A few of these were from Cape Forchu, but the people there, on the whole, were not favorable to the revival and invited Scott to preach to them once a month.[64] Argyle, on the other hand, embraced Alline and his preaching with enthusiasm, "and great was the religious Commotion among them."[65] All the members of the church of Jebogue who dwelt in Argyle withdrew from the church and conducted separate meetings of their own.

On Wednesday, October 30, 1782, the Rev. Jonathan Scott

62 *Jebogue Records*, 134 ff.
63 Scott, *Brief View*, 330.
64 *Journal*, 151; *Jebogue Records*, 195-196.
65 *Ibid.* 158; *Journal*, 147; Scott, *Brief View*, 226.

and the church of Jebogue held a solemn day of fasting and prayer, "to humble themselves before God for their Sins, and acknowledge his Hand, and ask Direction and Help of him under their broken Circumstances." In the forenoon the pastor preached from II Chronicles 6:29-30; and in the afternoon from Lamentations, 3:27.[66] Little good appears to have resulted. The remaining hundred pages of the *Jebogue Records* are filled with petty and vain attempts to discipline the "covenant-breakers"; and with the bitter feuds and sharp words which divided the congregation.

THE SOUTH SHORE. (6) LIVERPOOL

During the month of November, 1781, Alline continued his missionary journey around Cape Sable and along the south-western coast of the province. For the most part he found the people there "very dark." Many had not heard a sermon preached since their coming to the coast fourteen years before. The itinerant had expected to go from Barrington to Liverpool by water, but the morning after embarkation his schooner was captured by an American privateer, and he was set on shore. He made the long, rough journey of almost a hundred miles on foot, visiting Port LaTour, Port Roseway, Ragged Islands, Sable River, and other tiny and isolated fishing villages, which he would otherwise have missed, along the way.[67]

On December 3 he reached Liverpool. His arrival is recorded by Simeon Perkins, the Pepys of Nova Scotia, in his *Diary,* under the date of December 5, 1781. The entry is a typical example of the ease with which this privateering magistrate could mix his business and his religion.

> Mr. Henry Alline, a separate Preacher, belonging to Kings County, came here with Mr. Arnold & dined with me. He tells me he is an Itinerant Preacher, ordained by the Separate church, & has been preaching in Yarmouth, Argyle, Barrington, &c.,—Towards midnight the Prize Brigantine went on shore below the Point and bilged. She is loaded principally with Rum and is from the West Indies.[68]

The Rev. Israel Cheever, the Congregational minister of the town, whose position was already deeply undermined by his intemperance, failed to prevent the visitor from preaching in

66 *Jebogue Records,* 183-184, 198.
67 *Journal,* 147-148.
68 Simeon Perkins, *Diary,* December 5, 1781.

the meeting-house on a Friday afternoon. In the evening he entertained some company at "Mr. Tinkham's with a short Discourse, Singing & Praying."[69] During the following days interest increased, and Liverpool, despite its preoccupation with the coming and going of privateers and prizes, and with the rumors of an imminent French invasion, began to show signs of a revival of religion. As had been the case at Chebogue, the services of the minister were deserted. Mr. Cheever, in a fit of anger asked his church for a dismission. It was granted immediately without calling an ecclesiastical council.[70] The church was thus left vacant, although Mr. Cheever continued to live in the town and to preach in Old Zion.

In November, 1782, Henry Alline visited Liverpool a second time, coming around the shore as on his previous visit. Signs of revival immediately began to appear.

> . . . . some that were lively Christians prayed and exhorted and God was there with a truth . . . . Many were brought out of darkness and rejoiced, and exhorted in public. And O how affecting it was to see some young people not only exhort their companions, but also take their parents by the hand, and entreat them for their soul's sake to rest no longer in their sins, but fly to Jesus Christ while there was hope.[71]

One case in particular impressed Henry Alline. A young boy took his father by the hand after the sermon and said, "O father, you have been a great sinner, and now are an old sinner, with gray hairs upon your head, going right down to destruction. O turn, turn, dear father, return and fly to Jesus Christ."[72]

The key to such heart-rending scenes as the above is fortunately provided in the only examples of Alline's sermons which have survived. Ordinarily he preached extemporaneously and without notes. During this visit to Liverpool, however, he was induced to write out two of the discourses he had delivered there. These were, *A Sermon Preached to and at the Request of a Religious Society of Young Men, United and Engaged for the Maintaining, and Enjoying Religious Worship in Liverpool, on the 19th of November, 1782; A Sermon on a Day of Thanksgiving, Preached at Liverpool, on the 21st of November, 1782;* and *A Sermon Preached on the 19th of February at Fort-Mid-*

69 *Ibid.*, Dec. 14, 1781.
70 *Jebogue Records*, 159, 191-192; *Journal*, 166.
71 *Ibid.*, 167.
72 *Ibid.*, 167.

way.[73] An extract from the last named sermon will suffice to show the nature and emotional fervor of Alline's preaching. Taking as his text the words of Joseph, "I seek my brethren,"[74] he gradually identifies himself and those who are "Christians" with Joseph weeping over his worldly and sin-hardened brethren.

> How can I endure any longer to hear the groans of their sinking spirits, or stand against the humble acknowledgements of their cruelty to me! O! I feel the sighs and groans of their bleeding hearts and almost despairing souls, my breast throbs, my bosom burns, my heart aches, and my whole soul is disolved with melting love, and uncontrolable compassion for my poor distressed and broken-hearted brethren! and so pregnant is my bowels with compassion that my labouring soul was vent for the sympathy I feel! O! hand me to my bed-chamber, that I may give vent to the convulsions of my sympathizing bosom!

Such highly charged emotionalism, delivered in a fervent and eloquent manner, and accompanied no doubt with tears and sobs, was bound to have a tremendous effect upon his hearers. By Christmas Day, 1782, "the reformation" in the Liverpool church was complete. Simeon Perkins records that "Mr. Cheever preached at Mr. John West's and Mr. Alline preached at the meeting-house."[75] The victorious enthusiasts immediately formed themselves into a new church, "by telling their experiences and getting fellowship one from another: and so joined in a body separating themselves from the world."[76] The meeting-house which belonged to the town proprietors was placed at their disposal. This was the sixth and last of the Separate churches to be formed by Henry Alline.

THE CHURCHES REVISITED

During the early months of the year 1782, Alline had revisited the churches in western Nova Scotia. At Annapolis on the 25th of April, Thomas Handley Chipman was ordained by delegates from the Newlight churches. A vast concourse of people gathered for this occasion, and "some of the Christians

73 These sermons were published in Halifax, 1782-1783, by A. Henry. They are now extremely rare. Copies of the two Liverpool sermons are preserved in the library of Acadia University, Wolfville, N. S. There is also a copy of the *Thanksgiving Sermon* in the H. E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Copies of the Port Medway Sermon are to be seen in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, at Halifax, and also in the J. C. Brown Library at Providence, R. I. It was reprinted in 1795.

74 Genesis 37:16.

75 Perkins, *Diary*, Dec. 25, 1782.

76 *Journal*, 168.

were so carried away that they were almost past speaking."[77] John Payzant, Alline's brother-in-law and his earliest convert, preached at seven o'clock in the morning. Then a stage was built in a field where the delegates and the candidate stood while Alline preached a sermon and delivered a charge. There was exhorting of sinners and praising of God all night. Chipman remained as minister of the Annapolis-Granville church, but frequently made long missionary journeys to other parts of the province. Alline was thus provided with an able lieutenant.

In May, Alline visited the Saint John River once more, and in June arrived for the second time at Fort Cumberland. By a strange coincidence, William Black, the Methodist lay-preacher, had just departed, "prompted by a divine conviction," to preach among Alline's own people in Kings County.[78] This was the beginning of Methodist expansion and marked a turning point in the religious tide. Black was sound in doctrine and was not so extreme as Alline in his enthusiasm. In Cornwallis, Horton, Windsor, and even in Halifax, he found an encouraging welcome from people who were friends of experimental religion, but who objected to the excesses and extravagances of the Newlights. A third element was thus added to the forces of revival, and to the disputations of Newlights and Baptists there was now added the voice of Methodism.

During this first missionary journey, William Black preached as far west as Annapolis, founded a Methodist society at Windsor, and laid the foundations for another at Halifax. Returning to Cumberland in July, however, he found his flock there scattered and torn by the recent visit of Henry Alline. The classes were broken up; seventy members of the church had separated themselves from the rest, and there was a flood of antinomian mysticism. The disturber had passed on to Prince Edward Island before Black returned. There was nothing to do, therefore, but to set to work to gather up the remains, and lay again the foundations of Methodist discipline. New classes were organized, with about fifty members at Fort Lawrence, and thirty at Petitcodiac. Alline's followers continued to hold separate meetings, and from that time the break between the two schools of enthusiasm was complete. Henceforth, Black considered it his duty to warn people of

77 *Ibid.*, 153.
78 Smith, *Methodism*, I, 114.

the dangers of antinomianism, and to compete with and oppose the Newlights throughout the entire province. Like Alline himself, he felt a divine call to go forth to deliver men from the peril of mere formal religion; but unlike the former, he warned them not only against the forms of godliness without inward power, but also against undisciplined power.

Meanwhile, after preaching in the principal towns of St. John's Island (Prince Edward Island), and finding there only "a very dark people and indeed most of them openly profane."[79] Henry Alline had crossed Northumberland Strait to Pictou. There the destitute Highlanders crowded about him, hungry for the preaching of the Gospel. Among them and the Philadelphia settlers he found "four Christians," who rejoiced greatly at his coming.[80] His restless spirit, however, drove him on.

Early in August he crossed the wood-covered Cobiquid Mountains to Truro and Onslow. The Presbyterian ministers of this area had received word of his coming and had warned their people of the danger.[81] Despite this, however, Alline preached at a private house, and, as in other towns, soon had established a definite following. No doubt he was aided in this instance by the fact that many of the Onslow settlers were New Englanders, and inherited a natural prejudice against Presbyterianism. At both Truro and Onslow public debates were held with the Rev. D. Cock, and the Rev. D. Smith. The champions threaded their way through the doctrinal mazes of election, infra-lapsarianism and supra-lapsarianism, and the nature of God; but it was on the doctrine of the person of Christ that the Scottish ministers finally went down. Smith was compelled to admit Arian or Unitarian beliefs and Alline stood forth as the truly orthodox preacher.

Pausing only for a short time to preach to his old friends in the Minas settlements, the tireless evangelist pressed on to Annapolis and Yarmouth counties, and hence, around the Cape Sable shore to Liverpool, which place he reached on November 20, 1782. In the ten months since he had left there he had travelled more than nine hundred miles, on horseback, on snowshoes, or by boat. He had visited every settlement in the province except Lunenburg and Chester, preaching frequently two

79 *Journal*, 159.
80 *Ibid.*, 160.
81 *Ibid.*, 160.

and three times daily, and often pleading and praying with troubled souls until long after midnight. Now suddenly the physique which had withstood so many hardships broke down. Consumption, induced by exposure and probable close contact with carriers in crowded houses, set in.

Returning to his father's house in Falmouth in the spring of 1783, he remained "very ill and sometimes in the greatest racks and anguish of body" for several months. Despite this suffering, he wrote some of his *Hymns and Spiritual Songs,*[82] and from his sick-bed proclaimed the triumph of the spiritual life. Finally, convinced that he really had consumption, he determined to go and preach in new parts, as long as he "could ride or stand, if it was even to the last expiring breath."[83]

THE LAST JOURNEY

On the 27th of August, 1783, kneeling on the wharf at Windsor, Henry Alline prayed and bade farewell to his beloved Christians. A few days later his ship called at Saint John and he preached for the last time in the province of Nova Scotia. Further westward, along the coast of Maine, they encountered persistent headwinds and the voyage became so tedious to the impatient and fevered passenger, that he asked to be put ashore at Jones River. With almost all his remaining money, he bought a horse and set out to ride to Boston. To his surprise he found many settlements along the coast similar to those he had visited so often in Nova Scotia. At Bristal, Booth Bay, Sheep-Gut, Squam Island, Woolrich, Bath, Brunswick, Harrisicket, New Casco, and Falmouth he could not resist the urge to preach despite increasing illness and pain.

The *Journal* ends abruptly on November 17, 1783. Two months later the author, "very feeble, and to appearance in the last stage of a hectic, and much oppressed with asthma," arrived at the house of the Rev. David McClure in North Hampton, New Hampshire. He was kindly received, and on January 25 rode to the meeting-house and preached. Two days later he was seized with a hemorrhage. It was clear, at last, that death was close at hand, but Henry Alline who had once been so afraid to die now faced the end triumphantly. McClure faithfully chronicled the conversation and wishes of the dying saint.

82 Henry Alline, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (Dover, N. H., 1797). For fuller notice see below *Chapter Five.*

83 *Journal,* 171.

[He] "desired me to go to prayer; At the close he repeated a loud and joyful amen. It was evident soon after, that his reason was going, and his broken sentences were the breathings of a soul swallowed up in God." His last intelligible sentence was, "Now I rejoice in the Lord Jesus."[84]

His body was borne to the grave by six neighboring ministers, one of whom was the Rev. Seth Noble, the rebel pastor of Maugerville. Dr. McClure caused a monument bearing the following inscription to be placed over the grave.

> The Reverend Henry Alline
> of Falmouth, Nova Scotia,
> in the midst of his zealous
> travels in the cause of Christ,
> languished on the way, and
> cheerfully resigned his life
> at North Hampton, 2 Feb. 1784,
> in the 35 year of his age,
> whose remains are here interred.

At a later date the faded lettering on the gravestone was renewed, and the following words added to the original inscription.

> He was a burning and a shining light
> and justly esteemed the Apostle of Nova Scotia.[85]

CONCLUSION

For over a century the name of Henry Alline has been the subject of bitter attacks by denominational writers. By Anglican, Presbyterian, and Methodist as well as by the Congregationalist Jonathan Scott, he has been presented as "the Ravager of the Churches," a wild fanatic, the enemy of all decency and order, sowing heresy and spreading ruin wherever he went. That there are many facts to substantiate such a view is obvious. Nevertheless, it should be equally clear that Alline's life-work was not all destruction, nor his unquestionable sincerity and tireless effort to arouse his countrymen to a knowl-

84 *Ibid.*, 179. The last four pages of the *Journal* were written by Dr. McClure and contain a detailed account of the progress of Alline's sickness. There are also copies of letters written to the deceased's parents, relating to the manuscripts of the *Hymns*, and of the *Journal*, from which it appears that the latter was written in a form of short-hand writing which the author had devised for his own use.

85 The words "Erected by his nephew Joseph Alline," were also added. The stone is still standing in the cemetery near the Congregational Church, North Hampton, N. H.

edge of vital, experimental religion, entirely without positive and lasting results.

In hundreds of backwoods homes a new devotion and a new morality were kindled. The old shells of formalism and spiritual lethargy were broken through, and men and women found liberty and self-fulfillment in sharing in the fellowship and the enthusiasm of a democratic church. The extent of this influence cannot be measured. Outwardly, it led eventually to the emergency of the Baptist churches as the third largest religious group in Nova Scotia. Editions of *Two Mites,* and of *Hymns and Spiritual Songs,* published in New Hampshire and Connecticut between 1797 and 1804, are evidences of an even wider sphere of influence. But Henry Alline's greatest legacy was neither ecclesiastical nor theological, but moral. His impassioned preaching and the type of religious experience which he fostered implanted in the Nova Scotian character elements of piety and anti-worldliness which have lasted down to the present time. In short, the destroyer of the New England way was the founder of what might be described as a perennial Puritanism.

A few years ago, the late Professor Benjamin Rand of Harvard, writing in the *Kentville Advertiser* concerning Alline, said,

> Every page of his journal contains the outpourings of a soul in constant communion with those divine realities, by comparison with which the external world became of transitory importance . . . . In spirit he was liberal and catholic.
>
> Like a flame of fire he swept through the land at a period when there brooded over it a spirit of darkness, of which it is now difficult even to conceive . . . . His work was of permanant character . . . Henry Alline is the Whitefield of Nova Scotia.[86]

86 Benjamin Rand, "The Life and Journal of Rev. Henry Alline," *The Advertiser* (Kentville N. S., August 25, 1893). It was Dr. Rand who first brought the *Journal* to the attention of Prof. William James.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE LITERATURE OF THE GREAT AWAKENING

"O leave your little World, your contracted Orb, your polluted Ken, and soar to the Realms of angellic Delight; give your poor imprison'd Minds aloose but a Moment in search of Worlds unknown: court immortal Loves, and drink of those Rivers of Pleasure that make glad the City of God, and taste those Joys of ancient and never-failing Date."

H. Alline, *Thanksgiving Sermon.*

"Here is also a Cluster of other Mysteries and dreadful Jargon as may carry its own Evidence with it."

J. Scott, *A Brief View.*

INTRODUCTION

The religious revival in Nova Scotia between 1776 and 1784 was remarkable, not only for the excitement it aroused and the transformations it wrought in churches and individuals, but also for the relatively large number of books and pamphlets which it produced. In all, some seven volumes, comprising more than eight hundred closely printed pages, emerged from the presses in Halifax during these years. Because of the more widely known works of the Loyalist writers of the next generation, this early literary movement has been largely neglected by historians of Canadian literature.[1] It is true that these Pre-Loyalist works were confined to theological controversies which are no longer significant, and that their authors were looked down upon by the incoming Loyalists as rude and uncultured fanatics. Church and state also viewed these first attempts at creative writing as both heretical and subversive. They deserve, however, a more generous recognition from the twentieth century, for despite their limitations, they do contain much that is both eloquent and original; and they have an especial interest as the earliest expressions of Canadian religious thought.

The most prolific author of the Great Awakening was the Rev. Henry Alline of Falmouth. For convenience, his works may be divided into poetry and prose writings. In the first

1 Cf., J. D. Logan, *Highways of Canadian Literature* (Toronto, 1924), 36-37; V. B. Rhodenizer, *A Handbook of Canadian Literature* (Ottawa, 1930), 20-24; Lorne Pierce, *An Outline of Canadian Literature* (Toronto, 1927), 141. None of these mentions Jonathan Scott.

group fall his four hundred and eighty-eight original hymns; in the second, his theological works and his printed sermons. In addition to these, there is his *Journal* which was published in Boston in 1806, twenty-two years after his death.

HYMNS AND SPIRITUAL SONGS

The Rev. Jonathan Scott of Chebogue, writing in 1783, records that he had seen "one little Pamphlet containing twenty-two of his (Alline's) short Hymns.[2] No surviving copy of this hymn book has been discovered, but it was probably printed in Halifax before 1782, and was used by the author in his revival meetings throughout the province.

During his last illness at North Hampton, New Hampshire, in January, 1784, Alline gave his papers to his host, the Rev. David McClure, with directions that he should be particularly careful of "a number of hymns which he had prepared to be published." These were later forwarded to his nephew, Mr. Henry Alline of Boston, and in 1786 were printed by Peter Edes at his press, on State Street, Boston.[3] In 1795, a new edition of *Hymns and Spiritual Songs,* "with some Enlargements," was printed at Dover, New Hampshire, by Samuel Bragg, Jun., "for the Subscribers";[4] and in 1797 the same printer brought out a "Third edition."[5] In addition to all the hymns in the Boston edition, the third edition contains "A Call to Sinners," which is signed with the initals "B. R." and has a table of contents and some excerpts from Dr. McClure's account of Alline's last illness. "B. R." was the Rev. Benjamin Randal of New Durham, New Hampshire, the founder of the Free Will Baptists, whose career among the frontier settlers in New Hampshire and Maine was very similar to that of Alline in Nova Scotia.[6] The appearance of two editions of Alline's *Hymns* within two years is evidence of the popularity of their sentiments among the Free Baptists. A fourth and final edition

2 J. Scott, *Brief View,* 205.

3 There is a copy of this edition in the Library of Acadia University and also in the J. C. Brown Library, Providence R. I. It is not listed in Charles Evans, *American Bibliography* (Chicago, 1934).

4 Evans, *Bibliography,* X, No. 28169. There is a copy in the Library of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.

5 *Ibid.,* XI, No. 31714. Copies at Acadia, Harvard and A.A.S.

6 Cf., John Buzzell, *The Life of Elder Benjamin Randall, etc.* (Limerick, 1827); F. L. Wiley, *Life and Influence of the Rev. Benjamin Randall, etc.* (Philadelphia, 1915); I. D. Stewart, *History of the Free Will Baptists* (Dover, 1862).

was printed at Stonington-Port, Connecticut, in 1802, by S. Trumbull.[7]

From these facts it is clear that Alline's hymns were widely known and popular in both Nova Scotia and New England during the last two decades of the eighteenth century. This may be accounted for, in part, by what has been called "The Revival of Singing," which was then at its height. During a widespread reaction against the old psalmody and the introduction of livelier tunes, there was a demand for "spiritual songs."[8] But it was also due to the fact that in both New England and Nova Scotia there were large numbers of people who shared the sentiments of such songs, and found them a satisfying means of self-expression. Beginning in 1791, what has been called "The Second Great Awakening" occurred in the older colonies.[9] Alline's hymns, composed especially for the needs of "souls enlightened and groaning for liberty," were found to be of value in the new revival. Indeed, they are a definite part of the thought-pattern of the time, and provide a remarkably clear picture of the social and religious life of certain classes of society. Polite circles in Boston, Halifax, or New Haven might discuss Tom Paine, or the course of the Revolution in France, but in the out-settlements there were men and women who were thinking and speaking constantly of other things. The greatest value of *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* today is the light they throw upon this aspect of Canadian and American intellectual history.

The *Hymns* are divided into five sections or "books," dealing with Man's Fallen State, Free Salvation, The New Birth, Christian Travels, and Transporting Views and Christian Triumphs. These titles indicate the theological framework into which the author arranges human life. A close study of the contents of the hymns shows that certain recurrent ideas provide the pattern within this framework. The most frequent are: warnings against "carnal mirth"; reminders of death, and

7 Copies of this edition are at Harvard and J. C. Brown Libraries. Randall's hymn is omitted, also Hymn V, 100. Close examination reveals that the number 67 occurs twice in Book II of Dover and Stonington-Port editions, making the total number of hymns by Alline four hundred and eighty-eight, and thus justifying the statement of E. S. Ninde, that he was "by far the most prolific American hymn writer of his day." E. S. Ninde, *The Story of the American Hymn* (New York, 1921), 58.

8 H. W. Foote, *Three Centuries of American Hymnody* (Cambridge, 1940), ch. III.

9 Cf., C. R. Keller, *The Second Great Awakening in Connecticut* (New Haven, 1942).

"the gulph of endless pain" which lies beyond the "gaping grave"; cries of awakened sinners, "laden with guilt and born to die"; invitations to salvation; shouts of exultation in the experience of conversion; and the "travels" and visions of "the disentangled saints."

From a literary point of view, the *Hymns* are mostly doggerel. They are, however, far superior to many of the crude camp-meeting hymns of the later revivals, and are a considerable improvement over much of the psalmody in use at that time in the Congregational churches. No tunes accompany them, but the metres of the various songs are printed by each hymn, which reveal the poet's ability to use many different forms. The real significance of the hymns, however, lies not in their form, but in the fact that these words were the actual language of thousands of frontiersmen in that day and for thirty years afterward, and that they literally express the deepest concern of these people, both for themselves and for their families. Could one grasp the personal content of the following verses, for example, one would enter to some extent into the meaning of the Great Awakening.

When I was trembling on the brink
  Of death and long despair,
Ling'ring and fearing soon to sink,
  Then Jesus did appear.

. . . .

He gave my soul a heavenly peace,
  And gave me strength divine;
He made my cutting anguish cease,
  And said that he was mine.[10]

THEOLOGICAL WORKS AND SERMONS

The prose works of Henry Alline, apart from his *Life and Journal,* consist of two theological books and three sermons. From these it is possible to gain some idea of the author's powers as an orator and of his peculiar mystical theology.

The first and longest book is entitled *Two Mites, on some*

10 *Hymn* 32 *Book* III. Only one of Alline's hymns has survived in modern collections, "Amazing sight the Saviour stands." It was printed along with thirty-seven others in Smith and Jones, *Hymns Original and Selected* (Boston, 1805), and was copied in Nettleton's *Village Hymn* (Hartford, 1824), without the author's name. In later collections it is sometimes attributed to Nettleton himself, or is printed anonymously. Cf., *The Baptist Hymn and Tune Book* (Philadelphia, 1883); *The Church Hymn Book* (N. Y., 1874).

of the most important and much disputed Points of Divinity, &c., and was printed by A. Henry at Halifax in the early months of the year 1781.[11] Twenty-three years later, the Free Will Baptists of New Hampshire and Maine "voted to buy and have brother Henry Alline's *Two Mites* reprinted."[12] The result was a subscription edition published by Samuel Bragg, Jr., at Dover, N. H., in 1804. The title of this new edition was *Two Mites Cast into the Offering of God for the Benefit of Mankind by Henry Alline, Late Minister of the Gospel at Falmouth, Nova Scotia. With Some Amendments by Benjamin Randal, Minister of the Gospel at New Durham, New Hampshire.*[13] Rev. Isaac Dalton Stewart, the historian of the Free Will Baptist movement, points out that all the sentiments advanced by Alline were not endorsed by the denomination, but that the book was "extensively read, being almost the only anti-Calvinistic work then in circulation."[14]

Alline's peculiar doctrines were more fully expressed in a seventy-four page pamphlet of very small and tortuous print, entitled *The Anti-Traditionist.* First published in Halifax in 1783, this book was also reprinted by the Free Baptists at Dover, N. H., in 1797.[15] This work is far more rhetorical and extravagant in both language and doctrine than *Two Mites.* At times its eloquence reaches the heights of ecstacy and enthusiasm. Sometimes the author soars through a whole page in one sustained sentence. Every chapter ends with an outburst of passionate pleading whose rhythmic cadence helps one to understand the tremendous effect of Alline's preaching. For example,

> But O my Soul can I view the ravishing Scene, glide the attracting Stream, feast on the living Bread, and drink the essence of Angellic Cordials, without a friendly Warning, and an endearing Call to that wandering Soul, starving Stranger, benighted Mind, unfeeling Reason, wandering Jew, that never tasted of the clusters of Eschol? O no I must (while you read) knock at your Door and point you to the fragrant Fields of celestial Canaan, and tell you, Jehovah reigns, and you (Tho' Earth and Hell against you) are fully able, and may yet go in and possess, ah eter-

11 Cf., *Journal*, 98 and 116. A copy of this edition is in the Library of Acadia University, Wolfville.

12 I. D. Stewart, *History of the Free Will Baptists* (Dover, 1862), 81.

13 There is a copy of this edition in Houghton Library, Harvard University.

14 Stewart, *Free Will Baptists*, 81.

15 There is a copy of this book in Andover-Harvard Theological Library, Harvard University. It has neither the place nor the date of publication, but was probably the work of A. Henry, the Halifax printer, about 1783.

nally possess, those glorious Mansions of eternal Delight . . . . O believe him, rejoice in him, breathe Angellic Life, and live forever![16]

Although he preached many times a week, it was always extemporaneously; accordingly, Henry Alline's sermons are for the most part forever lost. Three sermons only, preached during his last visit to the South Shore, were printed by A. Henry at Halifax in 1782 and 1783. The first, *A Sermon preached to and at the Request of a religious Society of young Men and engaged for the maintaining and enjoying of religious Worship in Liverpool, on the 19th of November 1782,* is a highly allegorical treatment of the resurrection story, and contains a clear exposition of Alline's criticisms of the current theories of the Atonement.[17]

A second sermon, also preached at Liverpool, *A Sermon on a Day of Thanksgiving . . . on the 21st of November, 1782,* is particularly valuable on account of the light it throws on the attitude of the "Yankee Neutrals" of Nova Scotia to the American Revolution.

Finally, *A Sermon Preached on the 19th of February 1783 at Fort-Midway,* was reprinted by Blunt and March at Newburyport, Massachusetts, in 1795, under the title *A Gospel Greeting*, and again by S. Bragg, Jr., at Dover, N. H., in 1797, as *A Gospel Call.* The only explanation of the popularity of this sermon is the eloquence and emotionalism with which the goodness and love of God are presented.

ALLINE'S MYSTICAL THEOLOGY

To Henry Alline theology was always personal, experimental, and subject to the test of "feeling" and experience. At the same time he was essentially an evangelist and a rebel against the sterility, both in the doctrine and the spiritual life, of the provincial churches. This gave to his mystical doctrines a practical and polemical aspect which greatly increased their emotional content. It was the interplay of mystic, revivalist, and reformer in his pages which led his early critics to accuse him of incoherence. "His religious tenets," writes the biographer of William Black, "were fragments of different systems . . . without any mutual relation or dependence.[18] Rev. James

16 *The Anti-Traditionist,* 13-14.
17 See *supra,* 81.
18 Richey, *William Black,* 45.

Macgregor, the Presbyterian pioneer, described it as "a mixture of Calvinism, Antinomianism and Enthusiasm."[19] Later historians have for the most part accepted these early estimates.

To a far greater extent, however, than has been recognized, Henry Alline was influenced by other writers. Revolt against the Calvinistic system was widespread in the eighteenth century. Socinians, Arminians, and Free-Thinkers all joined in denouncing the decrees as harsh and unjust. Such critics were all too humanistic and cold for Alline, and though he may have been influenced by their arguments, he repudiated them as fiercely as the most stalwart defender of orthodoxy.[20] Rather, he found his guides among the more congenial ranks of the pietists and evangelicals, and allied himself with that stream of mystical teaching which had come down through William Law, John Milton, and the seventeenth century English sectaries, from Jacob Boehme.

To William Law's *Spirit of Prayer,* in particular, Alline was indebted for many of his most striking ideas.[21] In *Two Mites* and *The Anti-Traditionist* even the language is frequently that of the older author. When one remembers that Law's work has received the highest praise from outstanding English scholars, it seems unfair that the work of his humble Nova Scotian disciple has been so severely criticized and despised. Dr. Alexander Whyte, writing of *The Spirit of Prayer* and its companion volume, *The Spirit of Love,* points out that the intellectual and experimental range of these works is much more extended and profound than is the range of what is popularly known as orthodox and evangelical doctrine, and adds, "the dialogues which constitute so much of both those books are, to my taste, productions of a nothing less than a Platonic depth and beauty. I have laid down those books again and again saying with Walton: In their way, and on their subjects, show me another two books like those in all the world."[22]

It is the mystical theology of *The Spirit of Prayer,* which reappears in Henry Alline's books and sermons, and although

19 Quoted in George Patterson, *Memoir of the Rev. James McGregor, etc.* (Philadelphia, 1859), 351.

20 Cf., *Journal,* 163.

21 William Law, *Works* (London, 1762), VII. "The Spirit of Prayer" was first published in 1749. An edition was brought out in Philadelphia by Benjamin Franklin in 1760. Other editions appeared in Philadelphia in 1766 and 1780.

22 Alexander Whyte, *Characters and Characteristics of William Law* (London, 1893), xlii.

he was not so polished a writer as the English mystic, many of his pages compare favourably with the master's.[23] Indeed, in soaring prose and eloquence he surpasses him and attains heights of expression which the equally fervent but more restrained style of Law would not permit. At the same time, Alline was too much of a mystic himself to follow any man uncritically. "I will by no means eat poison," he once remarked, "because it is mixed with the best food."[24] He used those parts of Law's writings which first of all awakened an inner response within himself, and which supplied him with an alternative system to Calvinism.

The other authors whom Alline quotes, and to whom he is particularly indebted for his theological ideas and imagery, are John Fletcher, Edward Young, and John Milton. Fletcher's *A Rational Demonstration of Man's Corrupt and Lost Estate* (1772) provided not only well-tried arguments for the freedom of the will, but also ideas concerning the state of man before the fall.[25] The vivid imagination and morbid sentimentality of Young's *Night Thoughts,* which won for their author the sobriquet "the grave-yard poet," colored Alline's own realistic views of the Day of Judgment.[26] John Milton, himself a rebel against the older Calvinism, provided him ample quotations and dramatic ideas concerning the fall and redemption of mankind. In fact, the theme of Alline's theological speculations might very well be summed up in the words "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained." Unlike the older poet, however, his interest is in man rather than in Lucifer, and he carries the theme beyond the temptations of Christ to the final restoration and exaltation of the saints.

The problem that faced Alline and all those who revolted against the Calvinist system, was how to account for the presence

23 In a letter to William Black, July 13, 1783, the Rev. John Wesley wrote, "I have sent you (with other books) two volumes of Mr. Law's works, which contain all that Mr. Alline would teach if he could: only it is the gold purged from the dross; whereas he would give you the gold and dross shuffled together." John Wesley, *Letters,* VII, 182, Cf., also letter to Benjamin Chappel, Nov. 27, 1783. "A book of broad, ranting Antinomianism . . . he is a wild, absurd man, wiser in his own eyes than seven men that can render a reason." *Ibid.,* VII, 200.

24 *Two Mites,* 10.

25 John Fletcher, "An appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense: or A Rational Demonstration of Man's Corrupt and Lost Estate," *Works,* (London, 1836), I, 64ff.

26 Edward Young, *The Complaint, or Night-Thoughts on Life, Death and Immortality* (London, 1743).

of sin and evil in a universe which was supposedly the handiwork of a benevolent and almighty Creator. Following closely William Law's argument that the doctrine that the world was created by God "out of nothing" is to declare, that "there was once a period when God did not fill immensity, or that he was finite and limited, and is more glorious now than he once was,"[27] Alline attempts to explain the fact of sin in the world as follows:

> . . . you must observe that thro' the whole chain of Revelation you hear of God's being in Heaven, and of the Kingdom of Heaven; which is the Kingdom of God, sometimes called his Pavilion, and some times the everlasting Hills; all holding forth his Residence or everlasting Outbirth, but let not my Reader imagine these created, or corporeal Heavens or any Place made for his Residence, but what he was from Eternity possessed of, in and of himself: therefore from this eternal Kingdom, Pavilion or Out-birth, Adam and all angelic Beings derive their Clothing or Out-birth, or paradisical Kingdom.[28]

It is noticeable that Alline does not use the word "emanation" but it would seem that this word, used by William Law, Jacob Boehme and other mystics to describe the process of creation, is more applicable to his ideas than any other. The "Out-birth" is something which emanates or is exhaled from God. It is the idea of an eternal, uncreated nature, existing before the world or created nature. It is closely akin to the mysterious Jewish doctrine of the *Shekinah,* and the *Kabbala,* and to the eternal forms and ideas of Neo-Platonism.[29]

Man, being made in the image of God, shared God's "immortal Power of thought," and also God's "immortal Cloathing or Outbirth." That is, he was a spiritual being, existing in a spiritual body in a spiritual universe. Not only Adam, the first man, but all men existed in this pre-material state: "an innumerable Throng of angellic Beings, brought forth in this glorious System." Because they were spirits, there were no males and females. "Adam himself was a Male and Female being when he was as he came from God."[30]

> And now you have a more clear Discovery of the Glory of this angellic System and innumerable Crowd of Adorers, standing as one in divine

27 William Law, *Works,* VI, 2-8; VII, 55 ff; Alline, *The Anti-Traditionist,* 20.
28 *Ibid.,* 22; *Two Mites,* 221.
29 Cf., Hobhouse, *Writings of William Law,* 307 ff. The term *Out-birth* occurs frequently in Law's later writings, Cf., *Works,* VI, 58, 132, 158.
30 *The Anti-Traditionist,* 24. Alline here departs from Law (cf. *Spirit of Prayer,* 27), and follows Fletcher, *Works,* I, 67. Cf. also Law, *Spirit of Prayer,* Part II, 74 ff.

Union and Glory, a paradisical System to bask in the boundless Ocean of their Father's Love and Perfections. . . .

Ah! think, think, my dear Reader, what a glorious Display of Love, and Manifestation of infinite Goodness is here broke forth from the overflowing uncontainable Fountain! Countless Millions of empty Vessels forever to drink large Draughts of the celestial Stream.[31]

Having thus demonstrated the essential goodness of God, and the original spiritual existence of men, Alline next proceeds to explain the origin of sin, without recourse to the divine decrees or to the doctrine of imputation.

The tree of life, and knowledge of right and wrong, of which the Scriptures speak, could not have been a real tree, "For I cannot as yet be so imposed upon as to believe that this Son of God stood in continual Need of Sweet and Sower Apples and other corporeal fruit, together with Turnops, Cabbages and Potatoes, &c."[32] Alline arrived at this conclusion, it would seem, by means of a trance experience.

God forbid, that ever I should imagine that those Sons of God stood in need of any such beastly Food, being taught the Contrary, not only by the Word of God, but likewise, by my own Experience: for when thro' boundless Grace I was restored so far back as to taste but one glimmering Ray, or small Cluster of the Fruits of that Paradise, which Adam was in the full Fruition of, it was so infinitely Superior to all created Good, that had it been possible for me to have stood out the mortal watch without the Enjoyments of the Earth, I would never have divided the Soil any more with the Beasts.[33]

Man's fall was due to the fact that, because he was made in the image of God, he shared in the freedom of choice and of will which is part of the divine nature. "As long as Adam's desires centered in the divine being, and he aspiring after larger draughts from the infinite fountain, the union continued, and he remained pure and holy." But,

He begins to view the Beauty and Grandeur of his outward Creature; which pleasing Thought of his own Grandeur began to draw his Attention, and cause him to fall in love with his paradisical Clothing; so that of Consequence the inward Creature or Power of Choice turned from the only Spring of Life into his own Clothing, and therefore his will not only turned, but began to increase that way.[34]

31 *Ibid.*, 24-25.

32 *The Anti-Traditionist*, 28. W. Law believed the Trees to be the product of man's evil will. See *Spirit of Prayer*, Part II, 95.

33 *The Anti-Traditionist*, 28.

34 *Two Mites*, 30; *The Anti-Traditionist*, 31. Cf., Law, *Spirit of Prayer*, 11. "His first great sin . . . consisted in this, that he lusted to know, and took the Means of knowing, what Good and Evil are in the bestial Life of this World." Obviously Alline and Law differ on this point.

With man's evil choice, the whole glorious system was plunged towards destruction, for as has been already noted the whole human race was present in this pre-mundane existence. All participated in the evil choice which resulted in the fall, hence, all are guilty of, and tainted by, original sin. It will be immediately recognized that Alline has here fallen back upon the so-called *seminal* theory of the origin of souls, which was first introduced into Christian theology by Origen of Alexandria, at the beginning of the third century, and later developed by Augustine.[35] Alline, however, makes the individual's prenatal existence much more than a mere potentiality, and thus avoids the chief moral weakness in the theory as expressed by the latter writer. Each human personality actually and consciously participated in the first sin. He scornfully repudiates both the traducianist and the creationist theories that human souls are either generated like human bodies, or are created by a special act of God for each new born infant.[36] "For we do not imagine that God made mankind at a venture, not knowing the number of his posterity; or that it was left to Adam, or any other, whether the world should be peopled or not; . . . Tho' there are some poor benighted men in the world who vainly imagine that God is now making souls in these days."[37] The reason why men cannot remember this pre-existent state is that they have been in a "deep sleep" ever since the fall, held that way by a loving and merciful God until each has been tried and given another opportunity to choose the good.[38]

Now follows one of Alline's most novel ideas, the origin

35 Cf., F. R. Tennant, *The Sources of the Doctrine of the Fall and Original Sin* (Cambridge, 1903), 297 ff.; F. R. Tennant, *The Origin and Propagation of Sin* (Cambridge, 1902), 18, 174 ff. Origen borrowed the idea that souls are fallen celestial spirits who have been appointed to a corporeal life for the purpose of purification and restoration, from Plato's *Phaedrus*. Augustine emphasizes more the seminal presence of all generations in Adam, which does not require a pre-mundane fall. Both were attempts to express the idea of race unity and human responsibility for sin.

36 The direct source of Alline's ideas here is Fletcher's *Appeal* (*Works*, I, 67 ff.), which he quotes (*Two Mites*, 40). Law on the other hand while equally opposed to the Reformation doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, adopted a Traducianist attitude. (Cf. Law, *Spirit of Prayer*, 27; see also Alline, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, Book I,i.)

> When Adam stood in light
> For trial, I was there:
> Between eternal day and night,
> And did my will declare.

37 *Two Mites*, 41.

38 *Ibid.*, 45. Cf., Law, *Spirit of Prayer*, 3-4, "The greatest Part of Mankind, nay of Christians, may be said to be asleep."

of the physical universe. The pre-mundane race and even their "celestial cloathing" were entirely spiritual and incorporeal. The mere "falling of an angellic System would not change it to corporeal, for if it would, then the Devils would have been corporeal."[39] The physical world is a result of an "Interposition" on the part of God himself. Alline's own words best express the meaning of this word.

> . . . Let it be observed, that the Creature tho' fallen was not passive, but still an active being, and now acting and raging in Contrariety to God; . . . and therefore, of Consequence nothing could hold or do him good, but what stoped and redeemed from that acting in Contrariety to God; so that if God undertakes for his Redemption he must stop him from acting that Course, and therefore, this was God's Incarnation, so to enter in the fallen Creature, as to hold his active and raging Powers from Action, and as God was not a passive but active Spirit, therefore of Course, they were acting in Opposition to one another; and when God thus holds this contrary Spirit under such Suppression as to be kept from action, it must consequently stand forth corporeal; so that neither God nor the Creature are in themselves corporeal: but made or become so by the meeting Contrarieties of their two Natures. And thus my Dear reader may see that wherever there is any thing corporeal, there is fallen Nature interposed, so that Sun, Moon and Stars; Rocks, Hills and Stones; Fire, Air, Earth and Water, and every Thing that you see or feel corporeal, proclaims God incarnate, and that you are stopped a Moment from the Course of fallen Nature to be redeem'd, O my Soul, and what could God do more! . . . . For there is nothing but this interposing Hand or suppressing and restraining Spirit that keeps the Race of Adam from the same Pain and Misery that the fallen Angels endure, yea, and that Moment that this restraint is broke thro', the Creature awakes in keen Despair; but God being thus in them by his Incarnation they are held in a Possibility of Redemption.[40]

Alline has here a hold on that idea of divine immanence which was so characteristic of Jacob Boehme and his followers, and which has been developed by later philosophers and poets.[41] The physical universe is not a creation but a manifestation of God. All nature proclaims his indwelling presence.

The origin of the sexes lies in this suppressive activity of God. As a result of the fall there was already division and discord among the "innumerable Throng." God, therefore, brought "them who was already divided spiritually, into a

39 *The Anti-Traditionist*, 34-35.

40 *Ibid.*, 35. Cf., this explanation of material nature with Law, *Works*, VII, 16-17. "My creating *Fiat* stopped the workings of these rebellious Spirits, by dividing the Ruins of their wasted Kingdom, into an Earth, a Sun, Stars, and separated Elements."

41 For example Schelling, Coleridge, and the Romanticists. Cf., Hobhouse, *Writings of William Law*, 307 ff.

separate State corporeally, that each one might have all the advantage of his Incarnation, and that those which would be brought back might not be obstructed by the sinking Will and Choice of them that would not."[42] One by one he brought them individually into a physical body that each one might have their trial.

Those that reject and break thro' all this restraint and Work of God, continuing their falling course, will soon get their Will increased in Strength and Rapidity beyond all restraint or help, and then naturally go their own way the irrecoverable Course of fallen Nature: while those that are redeemed (more or less) are brought back to be one with God, partaking again of that Triune Life which they had lost, which restores the Union of the Male and Female Powers of the inward Creature, and likewise reunites all that are redeemed, by which they stand again as one in the same Union Male and Female as before they fell . . . .[43]

It will be noticed that Alline departs from the familiar Biblical account of the creation of Eve before the fall. Instead, he follows William Law in suggesting that the fall was a gradual process, and that "there was a Disorder and they were falling and wanted immediate help," even before the Woman was "taken out."[44] Woman, too, therefore, is recognized by this Protestant as a part of God's providential plan for the redemption of the race.

Having now removed, to his own satisfaction, the theological need for such a doctrine as predestination, Alline proceeds to expound his own doctrines of redemption and sanctification. Salvation does not depend upon any outward act of man (Arminianism), nor any decree of God (Calvinism), but upon "the union of the inner man to" and "the turning of the inmost soul after God." This mystical doctrine is weakened, however, by tying it up with some highly speculative ideas of the nature of the soul.

For what is Conversion, but Christ's changing and taking Possession of the inmost Soul? which is, at the time of the Change, completely sanctified. And now to shew the Reason why the Man thus converted is not wholly sanctified, or without Sin, I will proceed; Man in his fallen State, as has already been observed, consists of Body, Soul, and Spirit: viz., an animal, or elemental Body; a spiritual and immortal Body; and an im-

42 *The Anti-Traditionist*, 37. Cf., Law, *Spirit of Prayer*, Part II, 76 ff. "The first step therefore towards the Redemption or Recovery of Man, . . . was the taking his *Eve* out of him, that he might have a *second Trial* in Paradise.

43 *The Anti-Traditionist*, 38.

44 *Ibid.*, 37, Cf. Law, *Spirit of Prayer*, Part II, 79 ff. concerning "the gradual Fall of Adam."

mortal Mind: And at the hour of Conversion the Son of God takes possession of the inmost Soul, or immortal Mind, but leaveth the fallen immortal Body in its fallen State still.[45]

As long as earthly life lasts there will be a struggle between the sanctified and the unsanctified parts of the soul. "That which is born of God cannot sin," but continues to grow through continued acts of faith.[46] The Anti-Traditionist thus reintroduces the old Calvinistic doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, but bases it not upon "the immutability of the Decree of Election,"[47] but upon union with Christ through a recognized conversion experience.

As has often been the case, this doctrine received by ignorant and emotionally excited people eventually led to charges of Antinomianism against Alline's followers in Nova Scotia. It is quite certain that nothing could have been more remote from the mind of the evangelical author. "True redemption," he wrote, "is raising the desires and life of the inner man out of this miserable, sinful and bestial world, and turning it to Christ, from whence it is fallen."[48] And in an eloquent passage in *The Anti-Traditionist* he summons his readers to a practice of asceticism and bodily mortification worthy of the most austere monasticism. "Turn from all," he wrote, "Deny all: Leave all."

> I do not mean the outward and criminal Acts of Idolatry and Debauchery only: but any and every Thing in the Creature that in the least Degree amuses the Mind or leads the Choice from God. For even the most simple Enjoyments and Pleasures of Life will keep the Choice in action, and therefore the Creature amused from God, and consequently sinking deeper and deeper in its fallen and irrecoverable State. Nor will you ever return to be redeemed until every Idol, Joy, Hope, or Amusement so fails you that you are wholly starved out, and there is not only a Famine, but a mighty Famine in all created Good.[49]

Next to the above doctrine of sanctification, the Allenite teaching which created the greatest repercussion in Nova Scotia was his denial of a physical resurrection. This was, of course, quite consistent with his ideas of the physical as being merely a temporary "suppression." He reaches the peak of his el-

45 *Two Mites*, 94 ff. Alline found the idea of heavenly bodies and spirits in the *Spirit of Prayer*, 7.
46 *Ibid.*, 95.
47 *Westminster Confession*, XVII, 2.
48 *Two Mites*, 93.
49 *The Anti-Traditionist*, 42.

oquence and enthusiasm as he describes his own conception of the resurrection and last judgment. Jonathan Scott complains in one place that Alline's books are "interspersed with Poetry calculated to excite and raise the Passions of the Reader, especially the young, ignorant and inconsistent, who are influenced more by the Sound and Gingle of the words, than by solid Sentences and rational and scriptural Ideas of divine and eternal Things; and hereby are prepared to take in, and embrace all the destructive and Religion-destroying and Soul-destroying Sentiments contained therein."[50] The charge is especially applicable to the eschatological sections.

See, see a threatening Deluge now awakes, sulphurous Worlds bursts forth their Magazines of Fire and instantaneous start up ten thousand formidable tons of thunder, the heavens shake with the approaching scenes; the blazing sun is extinguished as a Taper: the Moon and Stars all convulsed refuse a gleam of light to the poor guilty, distracted and dissolving world: and falling nature feels her approaching doom.[51]

What awful throws! What heart-rending groans and cheerful shouts are now heard thro' the promiscuous throngs! Above Angels shouting, Seraphs praising, and Saints triumphing, and sinners roaring; Good God, and where am I?[52]

The scene is remarkably similar to a lively revival meeting. The resurrection, however, is not physical but spiritual. It is that "immortal body" which fell, which now rises again. The "elemental" or physical bodies, contrary to orthodox belief, are "burnt up and dissolved." The saints, those who have chosen Christ and are united with Him, are now owned by Him. "Divine beauty sparkling in every eye, and sacred love flushes in each angellic face." The unconverted, their contrariety heightened and maddened by the presence of so much goodness and love, are filled with "Wrath, Darkness, and Malicious Fire." This very enmity to holiness makes their torment eternal and their misery, or to use a modern psychological term, their sense of frustration, everlasting.[53]

The globe that fell by man's rebellion is not annihilated, but purified, and immortal like unto a glassy sea, mingled with fire . . . where those that are

50 Scott, *Brief View*, 168. Young's *Night Thoughts* provide most of the poetry. There are also two quotations from John Pomfert, *On the General Conflagration and Ensuing Judgement*.

51 *Two Mites*, 193.

52 *Ibid.*, 195.

53 *Ibid.*, 216. The whole conception of contrariety is taken over from William Law. Cf., *Spirit of Prayer*, Part I, 84; Part II, 35.

redeemed . . . reign forever: while the nature of the wicked makes an impassable gulph between them and the righteous. And now while all the dark caverns of eternal darkness are shook with dying groans, and hideous yells, and blasphemous cries, the glorious arches of heaven are ringing with doxologies of eternal praise.[54]

Alline does not set a definite day for the judgment, rather he believes that "to those who have thrown off the Canopy of Matter and Time, all Things must be both spiritual and NOW."[55] Similarly, since God is everywhere, the judgment will not take place at any one definite spot. Neither heaven nor hell are places but eternal conditions of the soul, and every day is judgment day. He justifies these conclusions by a bit of what may be called the first Canadian metaphysics.

In this mortal and corporeal State, there appears a Succession: but there is no such Thing as before or after and therefore they cannot rise one before the other. . . .[56]

It is as inconsistent to go back to before the beginning of Time, to talk of God's *electing* or reprobating the Children of Men, as for a Man to go round upon a Ring all his Days to find an End; for it is in pursuit of a period that was never known, even to God Himself.[57]

It has been said that "it is the weakness of Boehme and Law that the Gospel message of the loving Fatherhood of God is driven almost out of sight, and that the name of the Father appears to stand almost predominantly for the awful essence of fire, darkness, and chaos which underlies all existing things."[58] Certainly no one reading Henry Alline's books and sermons would accuse him of this fault. The purpose of the whole theological system which he erects is to demonstrate the essential love and goodness of God. Where among the literature of the frontier can one find anything to match the purity and the feeling of this description of the "interposing God"?

Turn, turn, O ye Prisoners of Hope; turn ye to the Stronghold while it is yet called Today, while the Lamb of God takes away the Sins of the World: behold he travels up and down, from City to City, and from Village to Village, and now stands at your Door intreating an Admission, till his Head is filled with Dew and his Locks with the Drops of the Night . . . . Behold, behold, the eternal King of Kings has become an Infant of a

54 *Ibid.*, 219. Cf. also A. T., 66. The term *glassy sea* is from Law. It represents "The Heavenly Materiality of the Angels' Kingdom before their Revolt . . . a Mirror of beauteous Forms, etc." *Spirit of Prayer*, 18 ff.
55 *The Anti-Traditionist*, 63.
56 *Ibid.*, 64.
57 *Two Mites*, 15.
58 Hobhouse, *Writings of William Law*, 315.

Span long, and suffers not only on Mount Calvary; but has been suffering among the Sons of Men ever since the Foundation of the World, and is still laboring with the Power of his Incarnation through all the fallen Race, striving Night and Day to redeem immortal Souls from eternal Sorrow.[59]

Yet, despite its eloquence, Alline's mystical theology failed to leave any appreciable mark on the thought of his countrymen. As a symptom of the intellectual revolt against Calvinism, it has historical interest, but as an alternative to the Genevan system it is pathetically inadequate. Probably no better criticism of Alline's writings can be given than that contained in a letter written by the Rev. John Wesley to William Black, July 13, 1783. "He (Alline) is very far from being a man of sound understanding; but he has been dabbling in Mystical writers, in matters which are too high for him, far above his comprehension. I dare not waste my time upon such miserable jargon."[60] Had he lived longer, many of the ideas which were still incomplete might have been rounded out and given a clearer interpretation, but it is doubtful if the mystical doctrines of Henry Alline, which were so far off the main stream of Christian theology, would ever have developed beyond the stage of novel speculations.

SCOTT'S "BRIEF VIEW"

This survey of the literature of the Great Awakening in Nova Scotia would not be complete without an examination of the one attempt by the opponents of the revival to defend the faith of their fathers, and answer the enthusiast who styled himself "Anti-Traditionist." The champion of the old order was the Reverend Jonathan Scott, pastor of the Congregational church at Chebogue in the Township of Yarmouth. The full title of his book is

A *BRIEF VIEW* of the Religious *Tenets* and *Sentiments,* lately published and spread in the Province of Nova Scotia; which are contained in a Book, entitled "*Two Mites,* on some of the most important and much disputed Points of Divinity, &c." And "In a *Sermon* preached at Liverpool, November 19, 1782"; and, in a Pamphlet, entitled "*The Antitraditionist:*" all being Publications of *Mr. Henry Alline.* With some brief Reflections and Observations: also *A View* of the Ordination of the Author of these Books: Together with *A Discourse* on external Order.

It contains three hundred and thirty-four, 21cm., pages, and

59 *Two Mites,* 73-74, Cf., Zech. 9:12, and Cant. 5:2.
60 John Wesley, *Letters,* VII, 182.

was printed by John Howe at his press "in Barrington-Street," Halifax, in the summer of 1784.[61]

In the *Records of Church of Jebogue,* which were also written by Scott, the pastor states that *A Brief View* was printed by subscription.[62] Unfortunately, the list of subscribers was not printed with the book, but doubtlessly contained the names of many prominent Old Lights in Yarmouth and Cornwallis. There are, however, many personal and biographical notes, relating to Alline and other religious leaders in the province, which are of historical value.

In his style, Scott is naturally much more restrained than his opponent. His book is made up of solid, unimaginative, and familiar theological arguments in defence of Calvinism. One feels that he is mystified and baffled by Alline's theories, and on the whole not too successful in rebutting them. At times, however, his sharp rejoinders and caustic comments on the behavior of the revivalist are highly expressive and amusing. As one reads the book through, one is filled with a growing amazement that such works should have been produced, and such a deep controversy have been waged by uneducated farmers in the remote villages of Pre-Loyalist Nova Scotia.

Beginning with the proposition that "Our Faith is finally to be determined by the holy Scriptures and not merely by the Opinions of Men," *A Brief View* takes up, one by one, Alline's characteristic doctrines and proves them to be scripturally unsound. Probably the chief value of these arguments is the faithful picture they give of Puritan orthodoxy as it was preached in Nova Scotia. The contrast between the assertion that "divine, revenging Justice is a lovely, bright and glorious Perfection in the holy God," and Alline's declaration that it is "the Nature of Devils," shows how wide was the gulf between the two camps. With the rising tide of personal and political freedom, and the growing appreciation of the dignity and rights of man, the old system was bound to crumble. Chapter XV of *A Brief View* contains a valuable contemporary picture

61 There is a copy of this extremely rare work in the Congregational Library, Boston.

62 *Jebogue Records,* 186. "Only four Books were subscribed by the Church, and six by the Congregation in Jebogue . . . And some of the Members of the Church smartly objected, and manifested warm Disgust against the Pastor on Account of this Book.'"

of the disintegration as it occurred in the New England churches in Nova Scotia.

Without uncharitable Reflections against the Inhabitants of this Land, it may be said, that there is a great Need of Reformation; . . . . In all the Towns and Places in this Province where I have had any Acquaintance with the Circumstances of the People in religious Matters, there has appeared to me to be a great Want of religious Reformation, and a loud Call for *Magistrates, Ministers, Heads of Families,* and all Sorts of People to exert themselves in their proper Stations, and use their influence to promote it, and to suppress the Growth and Increase of *Vice* and *Profaneness.* The great Want and Neglect of *Family Religion, Instruction* and *Government* that is to be found in this Land, the prophane *Swearing, Intemperance, Sabbath-breaking, Uncleanness,* vain *Company-Keeping,* and spending *Time at Taverns* and *Games;* together with the *Unconcernedness, Carelessness* and deep *Security* about religious and eternal Concerns, that is seen manifest among People, makes our Circumstances with Respect to Religion to appear very gloomy, and wear a mournful Face and Aspect, in the Eyes of serious People who have Understanding about the Things of Religion. And such would be ready and forward, I trust to encourage any just and prudent Endeavours, though they were but feeble, to remedy our sad and sorrowful Circumstances. Nevertheless, will serious People among us, who are of good Understanding, and are not tainted with Enthusiasm, nor a Party-Spirit, upon serious Reflection and Examination of the Measures and Methods that have been, and still are prosecuted, conclude that they are, in their own Nature or Tendency, calculated to remedy our sad Circumstances, and effect Religious Reformation, either in *Doctrine, Discipline,* Worship or Manners? The Truths and Doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, upon which the Church of Christ is founded, are tortured, twisted, and destroyed in such a Manner, and to that Degree, that there is scarcely any Doctrine of our holy Religion expressly, or by necessary Consequence not overthrown and destroyed; and the most absurd and dangerous Tenets brought in and asserted in their Stead. The Discipline of the Order of Christ's House is trampled upon to that Degree, that it is taught and inculcated as a Duty for Professors to fly from the Churches to which they belong, *and immediately shake off all Affinity with them,* and the regular Pastors of them, and seperate from them, in open Violation of all Order, Covenants, Vows and Engagements whatsoever; and these Instructions are carried into Execution with the greatest Vigour and Rapidity. The Assemblies meeting on Lord's Day for the public Worship of God, are broken and seperated. And although among the young People there have been a Number that have quitted their Prophaneness, as I hope, and some Extravagance in Dress, and some other Things, and have appeared to be awakened and seriously concerned about their Souls and the Things of Religion, all which I can heartily approve of in their Proper Place and Use; yet how have our young People been led into *Parties* and *Seperations,* and such other Irregularities and Absurdities, and wild Imaginations, as have in Fact given a deeper Wound to *Religion,* and prejudiced the Minds of People against it more than all their former Prophaneness and Carelessness, ever had done. . . . And as their inward Experiences and Affections have been excited and promoted, it may be by such Instructions

as are published to the World, of which we have taken a View in this Treatise; what just Ground have we to fear, that most of our People, who are unacquainted in a great Measure with the secret Workings of their Hearts and the subtile Devices of Satan, are now in the Embraces of such false and delusive Affections and Exercises of Mind, and are so established and confident of their being in the right, that they are Proof against all Conviction either from the Light of Reason or Revelation; and so are in the greatest Danger of being forever undone, even while they are under the strong confidence of their being in a safe and happy Condition. Does not the Spirit of *Error, Enthusiasm,* wild *Imagination,* and vain Belief, run through the Books of our Author from the Beginning to the End of them. . .?[63]

CONCLUSION

The literature of the Great Awakening was the expression of an inner struggle which was taking place in the minds and hearts of many persons in Nova Scotia in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. While Nova Scotians on the whole remained neutral during the American Revolution, they were in open revolt against the old order and the old doctrines of Congregationalism. Through his preaching, his hymns, and his theological writings, Henry Alline made this revolt vocal, and gave it coherence. It is true that the path of mystical speculation which he proposed ran for the most part through waste places; but it did provide an escape and facilitated the transition from the New England way to the evangelicalism of the newer churches. Scott's *Brief View* is the defense of the old system. It is solid, scriptural, and unimaginative. To the author and to the forces of conservatism and order which he represents, the "enthusiasts" were spiritual rebels, "who, with a *Joab's Kiss,* join a fatal Thrust, and shed out the *Bowels* of true Religion and Godliness upon the Ground, and leave it wallowing in its own Gore, as it is this Day in many Places in this Province.[64] This literature, therefore, marks a definite period in the intellectual history of Canada; it is the echo of the birth struggles of a religion which was more adaptable to the self-reliance, the ignorance, and the emotional instability of the frontier.[65]

63 *Brief View,* 256-257. For fuller discussion see M. W. Armstrong, "Jonathan Scott's "Brief View," *The Harvard Theological Review,* XL (Apr. 1947), 121-136.

64 *Ibid.,* 216.

65 Rev. John Seccomb, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Death of the Honorable Abigail Belcher* (Boston, 1772): and *A Sermon preached at the Ordination of Rev. Bruin Romcas Comingoe* (Halifax, 1770), may also be included in the Puritan literature of Nova Scotia.

CHAPTER SIX

THE LOYALISTS

"From the clime of New Scotland we wish you to know,
We are still in being—mere spectres of woe,
Our dignity high, but our spirits are low."
Philip Freneau, 1785.

NUMBERS AND CHARACTER OF LOYALIST MIGRATION

The passing of Henry Alline coincided with the arrival in the province of the second great wave of immigration, the Loyalists. "Everybody, all the World moves on to Nova Scotia," wrote Joshua Upham from New York in 1783.[1] Between the last of April and the end of November of that year, thirty thousand refugees, from all the revolting colonies, landed in Nova Scotia, more than doubling the population of that frontier province. The total number arriving in the Maritime Provinces between 1775 and 1784 could not have been less than thirty-six thousand persons.[2]

For convenience, the new arrivals may be divided into four classes: officials, colonial troops, civilian refugees, and British or foreign regulars.

Among the first class were many members of the colonial legislatures and judiciaries, prominent members of the learned professions, and large property holders.[3] The presence of this polished and highly capable group of aristocrats has given an air of romance to the whole Loyalist migration. Naturally, they aspired to positions of eminence in their new environment, similar to those which they had occupied in their old homes.

1 *Winslow Papers*, W. O. Raymond, ed. (St. John, 1901), 124.

2 The number of loyalists who actually received grants in Nova Scotia has been very carefully computed at 21,790. In addition to these there were 400 families (perhaps 1500 persons), whose grants are not recorded, bringing the total for the province up to 23,390. Margaret Ells, "Settling the Loyalists in Nova Scotia," *Canadian Historical Association* (1934), 105-108. In New Brunswick there were probably 12,000 at the least. (Cf., Robert Morse, "Return of the Disbanded Troops and Loyalists Settlers 1784," *Canadian Archives, 1884*, xli). Some 600 loyalists settled in Prince Edward Island and 400 in Cape Breton. This would make a total of 36,490.

3 Lorenzo Sabine, *Biographical Sketches of the Loyalists of the American Revolution* (Boston, 1864), I, 78 ff: Egerton Ryerson, *The Loyalist of America and Their Times* (Toronto, 1880), II, 130ff.

"They are a People very difficult to please," wrote Governor Parr to Lord Shelburne.[4] Within a year, those of them who had settled north of the Bay of Fundy had succeeded in securing from the Crown separate provincial rights, with a government largely in their own hands.[5] Politically, socially, and intellectually this group had a far-reaching influence on the life of the Maritime Provinces. At the most, however, they formed only a very small minority of the loyalist immigrants.

A second, and far more numerous, class were those who had served as soldiers in the various loyalist corps which were raised in every colony by influential local leaders during the war.[6] These were not professional soldiers, but volunteers like their kinsmen in the Continental army. Many of them acted as armed police or as spies. It was only natural that the bitterest hatred of the insurgents should be turned against this group. To return to their former homes was to risk tarring and feathering. At the conclusion of the war, therefore, the remnants of twenty-one corps of the Provincial Line proceeded to Nova Scotia and were there officially disbanded. They were settled, according to a plan suggested by Sir Guy Carleton, in lines along the St. John River, with their officers in their midst like an army guarding the frontier nearest the United States.[7] Unfortunately, most of them did not arrive in St. John until the middle of September, 1783, too late to make adequate preparations for themselves and their families for the winter. Their sufferings were intense. "Women, delicately reared, cared for their infants beneath canvas tents rendered habitable only by the banks of snow which lay six feet deep in the open spaces of the forest . . . Strong, proud men cried like children . . . ."[8] The result of these hardships, together with unsatisfactory grants of land, was that many of the provincial veterans abandoned their farms. Those who remained continued for many years in a state of dire poverty

4 *Canadian Archives* (1921), E, 4.

5 The province of New Brunswick was set up in 1784.

6 W. O. Raymond, "Loyalists in Arms," *N.B.H.S.* V (1904), 189-223, estimates that there were fifty corps of Loyalists numbering over 15,000 men. Of these 3,520 settled in New Brunswick. Cf., *Winslow Papers*, 244 ff. for names and number of corps settled.

7 W. O. Raymond, *The River St. John* (St. John 1910), 537 ff. Field officers received 1000 acres, captains 700, etc., down the scale to privates who received 100 acres each, besides 50 acres for each member of their households.

8 *Ibid.*, 547 ff.

and social regression.[9] The effect of this condition upon the political and intellectual development of the country has never been appraised, but because of the large number of loyalists of this class, it cannot have been negligible.

A third class of loyal emigrants consisted of ordinary refugees. There were farmers, artisans, small tradesmen, merchants, and laborers who for the sake of security or gain had followed the royal army to New York, and at the close of the war were swept along with the tide to Nova Scotia. Many of them were, no doubt, sincerely attached to the British crown and until it was too late had been convinced that the overwhelming might of the Empire must prevail. Others had only desired to remain neutral in the strife, but their neutrality had been interpreted as Toryism by their more zealous neighbors.[10] Lord Sydney's proud boast that he would make Nova Scotia "the envy of the American States" may also account for the presence of some immigrants who were actually prospectors rather than loyalists. These would have migrated anyway, even if their way had not been paid to Nova Scotia.[11] Finally, there were included among the refugees some two thousand blacks, for the most part runaway slaves, who had taken advantage of the British offer of liberty and protection. They received grants in Annapolis, Shelburne, and Sydney counties, and on the St. John River.[12]

It has been estimated that sixty-two percent of the loyalists who were granted lands on the peninsula of Nova Scotia were civilians, and would, therefore, fall into this third class.[13] While some of them had been farmers in their old homes, many of them had not. Besides receiving 300 to 600 acres of land, each family was given one year's provisions, clothing, medicine, grindstones, spikes, nails, hoes, axes, spades, ploughs,

9 Evidence of the unsatisfactory condition of the soldier settlements is abundant in contemporary writers who visited them. *Winslow Papers*, 337-338. Patterson, *James MacGregor*, 350ff.; Patrick Campbell, *Travels in the Interior Inhabited Parts of North America*, 1791-92. H. H. Langton, ed. (Toronto 1937), 46.

10 Cf., the very bitter denunciation of *Neuters* in Nathaniel Whitaker, *The Reward of Toryism, A Discourse . . . Delivered at the Tabernacle in Salem, May, 1783* (Boston, 1813).

11 Hansen and Brebner, *The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples*, 56.

12 Cf., T. W. Smith, "The Slave in Canada," *N.S.H.S.*, X, 20-22. Ells, *Settling the Loyalists*, 106n., gives the number of blacks as 2,000; of these 1,100 later removed to Sierra Leone. Some of the N. S. negroes were soldiers of the *Black Pioneer Army Corps* which was disbanded in Nova Scotia.

13 *Ibid.*, 106.

ammunition and muskets, and a certain proportion of window glass. There was considerable delay in allocating lands, however, and many of the settlers suffered considerable hardships. Others unacquainted with farming spent their money on buildings "and other unprofitable pursuits," and soon found themselves in such straitened circumstances that they became discouraged, abandoned their farms and left the province.[14] On the whole, however, this group provided the province with a solid, conservative, and industrious class of farmers and tradesmen, who became the center of its economic and social development.

The fourth and last class of loyalists were British and German troops who, despite Governor Lawrence's famous warning, "Every soldier that has come into this province has either quitted it or become a dram-seller," were disbanded and settled in Nova Scotia at the close of the war. These were principally members of the 42nd Highlanders, the 82nd Regiment, and various Hessian, Hanoverian, and Waldeck regiments.[15] They were settled in lines, and their officers were retired at half-pay if they settled with their men. In this way the government hoped to have at its disposal an effective force of trained militia for the defense of the province. The transition from the parade ground to the stump field was not made, however, without considerable difficulty. Many of the soldiers were unmarried. "Rum and idle habits contracted during the war," remarked Colonel Dundas, "are much against them."[16] Probably as a group they had expected too much from the British government, and when, as was often the case, they could not even obtain titles to their lands, their resentment was bitter.

14 Anthony Lockwood, *A Brief Description of Nova Scotia, etc.* (London, 1818), 63 ff. Cf., also Parr to Shelburne, Oct. 9, 1789, *Canadian Archives* (1921), 371. "The first class of People who arrived there (at Shelburne), ... were composed chiefly of the Dregs and Banditti of that Town (New York), of Boston, of other Sea Ports with upward of 1000 Disbanded Soldiers, who returned to the United States and other parts, as soon as the Provisions &c allowed by Government ceased. Others spent what money they had in fine houses, which they sold together with their Lands for mere trifles, then went away."

15 Cf., Marion Gilroy, "Loyalists and Land Settlement in Nova Scotia," *P.A.N.S. Publication* No. 4 (Halifax, 1937), for regiment and rank of many of the settlers.

16 *Winslow Papers*, 337. He also wrote, "I cannot say much for the industry of the disbanded soldiers, indeed I cannot say that I ever saw the policy of bribing soldiers of the Line to leave their regiments—it has by no means answered. All the tradesmen who would be valuable at home are starving here or gone to the States. The half-pay provincial officers are valuable settlers as they are enabled to live well and improve their lands." *Ibid.*, 338.

The character of the loyalist immigrants as a whole may well be summed up in the words of the Rev. Edward Manning who saw them come and knew them well.

> They came to our shores in thousands. Among these were many men of high character and merit, many belonged to the learned professions, particularly the law, who of course became the leading men in the provinces; and who, no doubt proved a blessing to the country in many points of view. But the great mass of the emigrants were of a different description; many of them were disbanded soldiers, etc. Such an assemblage, coming directly from the seat of war, would be ill-calculated to benefit the morals of the rising generation. Vice of every kind, incident of the camp and navy prevailed.[17]

It is unnecessary here to enter into further details of the sad story of the sufferings of these people. As early as September 1784, *The Royal St. John Gazette* contained "Proposals for Printing by Subscription an History of the Settlement of His Majesty's Exiled Loyalists," to show, among other things, "the effect idleness and want of employment may have on the conduct and morals of this unfortunate people."[18] Three years later, the Rev. Jacob Bailey reported from Annapolis County, "Many families are confined to a single apartment, built with sods, where men, women, children, pigs, fowls, fleas, bugs, mosquitoes and other domestic insects, mingle in society.[19]

The lands assigned to the exiles were for the most part those wildernesses which lay between the earlier townships. On the peninsula, Shelburne, Digby, Annapolis, and Chedebucto (Guysborough), received the largest numbers, but there were also many grants in Cumberland County (especially around Parrsboro), in Halifax County, and in the unsettled parts of the older townships.[20] In New Brunswick, where the country was almost entirely unpopulated, settlement followed the coasts and the river valleys. These settlements, even those in the same province, were unconnected except for paths or blazed

17 Quoted in De Blois, *First Horton Baptist Church*, 10. Other early missionaries confirm this opinion, e.g., Rev. James Robertson, *History of the Mission*, 28, says that the disbanded soldiers "were a moral nuisance to the colony."

18 *The Royal St. John Gazette*, Sept. 9, 1784. Copy in N.B. Provincial Museum Library, St. John.

19 Bartlet, *Frontier Missionary*, 216.

20 A complete list of the grantees and the location of their grants may be found in Gilroy, "Loyalists and Land Settlement." Col. Morse's "Return," *Canadian Archives, 1884*, gives the general figures for each locality, and also the interesting summary of 12,383 men, 5,486 women, 4,671 children above 10 years of age, 4,575 children under that age, and 1,232 servants (probably blacks). The great disproportion of men and women was bound to cause serious moral problems in the new settlements.

trails through the forests.[21] Pitted against the rude forces of nature, isolated and forgotten, the United Empire Loyalists, like the Pre-Loyalist pioneers before them, soon succumbed to the demoralizing influences of the frontier, and in their turn became susceptible to the peculiar attractions of enthusiastic religion.

THE TORY CLERGY

Among the loyalist refugees were thirty-one clergymen of the Church of England.[22] Many of these had suffered severely during the Revolution.

> The Clergy were "everywhere threatened, often reviled. . . . sometimes treated with brutal violence." Some were carried prisoners by armed mobs into distant provinces . . . and much insulted, without any crime being alleged against them . . . some . . . flung into jail . . . for frivolous suspicions of plots, of which even their accusers afterwards acquitted them. Some were "pulled out of the reading-desk because they prayed for the King, and that before independency was declared." Others were fined for not appearing "at military musters with their arms." Others "had their houses plundered." "Were every instance of this kind faithfully collected, it is probable that the sufferings of the American Clergy, would appear in many respects, not inferior to those of the English Clergy in the great rebellion of last (i.e. the 17th) century; and such a work would be no bad supplement to Walker's 'Sufferings of the Clergy.'"[23]

Eighteen of these exiles were appointed by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts to parishes in the Maritime Provinces. Others received government posts, while the remainder returned to England or found their way back to the United States. The British government promised assistance "in affording to His Majesty's distressed and loyal subjects the means of religious instruction and attending the Public worship of Almighty God." In Nova Scotia 30,150 acres of land were reserved for the Church, and financial assistance continued for forty-eight years.[24] Most important of all, a colonial bishop, the Rev. Charles Inglis, formerly rector of Trinity Church, New York, was appointed, and entered upon

21 "It may, without impropriety, be said, that in the whole Peninsula there is only one road, that leading from Halifax . . . to Annapolis Royal, a distance of about 135 miles." Robert Morse, "A General Description of the Province of Nova Scotia, etc., 1783-1784," *Canadian Archives, 1884*, xxxv, xxxvi.

22 For list of names and short biographical notes consult, Eaton, *The Church in Nova Scotia*, Chapter X.

23 From a Report by Rev. C. Inglis of New York, Oct. 21, 1776, in *Digest of Records of S.P.G.*, 76.

24 *Ibid.*, 116. In a letter to Mr. Cumberland, Sept. 21, 1788, Bishop Inglis urged Government promotion of Anglicanism as a means of increasing loyalty. *Canadian Archives, 1912*, 227.

his duties with both energy and devotion, in the year 1787. To his good taste must be credited many attractive churches in Nova Scotia. In 1790, King's College was founded, with the following restriction among its rules: "No student shall frequent the Romish mass or the meeting houses of Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, or the conventicles or places of worship of any other dissenters from the Church of England, or where divine service should not be preformed according to the liturgy of the Church of England, or be present at any seditious or rebellious meetings."[25] It was further decreed that any student wishing to obtain a degree from the college must subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles.

It would seem, therefore, that the Church of England, established by law, encouraged by the government, and controlling the one institution of higher learning in the province, was again in a fair way of becoming the dominant religious body of Nova Scotia. "An infant church," exclaimed the Bishop of Oxford in 1784, "is rising under the favor and protection of the Government in Nova Scotia, and it is of a singular description, consisting of honourable families; under the pastoral care of fellow sufferers."[26] There were, however, certain factors which prevented the triumph of episcopacy.

In the first place, there was a very sharp cleavage between the Loyalist and the older inhabitants of the province. The newcomers were inclined to adopt an attitude of superiority towards the farmers and fishermen of the earlier migrations, and to regard them as "the bow and arrow breed." Colonel Thomas Dundas described them as "a despicable race," and even Bishop Inglis felt that they had "little sense either of religion, order or loyalty."[27] This spirit was naturally resented by the older settlers, and the scorn reciprocated. Frequently, disputes arose over the possession of certain grants of land, which the Pre-Loyalists had occupied for many years, but which were now claimed by Loyalists.[28] Elections for local and provincial offices were hotly contested by the rival factions; indeed the origin of the present political parties in Nova Scotia may be traced to some extent to the early struggles between the Loyalists or "Tories," and the earlier planters or "Whigs." It was inevitable that the

25 Eaton, *Church in Nova Scotia*, 203.
26 Sermon to S.P.G., Feb. 2, 1784. Quoted in *Royal St. John Gazette*, Sept. 9, 1784.
27 *Winslow Papers*, 338; *Canadian Archives* (1912), 234.
28 *Winslow Papers*, 275.

Church of England should become identified, in the minds of many of the older inhabitants, with their opponents. The declaration of one of the dissenting teachers that "Infant Baptism and Confirmation were invented in Hell" probably summed up the sentiments of most of his hearers regarding the Church. In short, the spirit of dissent and independence was deepened and became more stubborn than ever in Nova Scotia because of the animosity aroused by the superciliousness of the Loyalists.[29]

A second obstacle in the way of religious uniformity was the fact that not all of the Loyalists themselves were Anglicans. There were many "Dissenters" among them, who spurned the *Book of Common Prayer,* and clung to their own particular modes of worship as tenaciously as the Pre-Loyalist Congregationalists.[30]

There were no Congregational ministers among the refugees who came to Nova Scotia, but there must have been many members of that denomination among the refugees from New England. A Lutheran clergyman, Rev. Michael Bernard Houseal, of New York, was among the exiles who arrived at Halifax.[31] The greater number of loyalist dissenters, however, were Presbyterians and Methodists.

Plans for a Presbyterian church in the rapidly growing loyalist metropolis of Shelburne were submitted to Governor Parr in September 1783, and in the following year a letter from

29 For further treatment of subject see, M. Ells, "Loyalists Attitudes," *The Dalhousie Review* (Oct. 1935), XV, 320-334.

30 Sir Guy Carleton writing to Lord North from New York, Aug. 26, 1783, stated that he believed that the greater part of the settlers going to Nova Scotia were members of the Church of England. *Canadian Archives* (1894), 407. Canadian and American historians have for the most part accepted the truth of this assumption. Cf., e.g., Eaton, *Church in Nova Scotia,* 100; S.D. McConnell, *History of the American Episcopal Church* (Milwaukee, 1916), 204. In a brief examination of the evidence, based on long years of study, however, Bishop W. S. Perry, *The Alleged "Toryism" of the Clergy* (n.p.;n.d.), 24, stresses the adherence of the majority of the American Church to the cause of independence, and states that it was "The predominance of the Presbyterian and Congregational elements in the refugee emigration to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick," which accounts for "the ascendencey" of dissenters there. While this is a very extreme statement of the case, and does not take into consideration many of the local factors which were at work in the provinces changing Anglicans into Dissenters, it does serve to focus the attention on the fact that the preponderance of Anglicans among the loyalists may have been over-emphasized in the past. I. S. Harrell, *Loyalism in Virginia* (Philadelphia, 1926), 65, points out that in that state loyalists and patriots cannot be divided according to religious lines.

31 Vernon, *Bicentenary Sketches,* 67 ff. Mr. Houseal ministered to the German Church in Halifax which had always been intimately connected with St. Paul's. In 1786 he became a clergyman of the Church of England. A Lutheran Church was also built by the Hessian and Dutch loyalists at Clementsport. It later became a part of the Church of England.

the church, signed by its minister, the Rev. Hugh Fraser, former chaplain of the 71st Regiment, appeared in one of the Halifax newspapers.[32] In a petition for aid, addressed to the Right Honourable William Pitt, the congregation describe themselves as consisting of "numbers from different Provinces, who were educated in the principles of the Church of Scotland, and still adhere to her doctrines and form of worship."[33]

A second loyalist minister of the Church of Scotland, the Rev. George Gilmore, formerly of Voluntown, Connecticut, and Nobletown, New York, where he had endured considerable persecution because of his Tory views, received a grant of land on dreary Ardoise Hill in Hants County. His congregation was composed to a great extent of loyalists and disbanded soldiers of the 84th Royal Highland regiment.

It may safely be assumed that a majority of the other Highland soldiers settled in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick at the close of the war were dissenters. In an account of a missionary tour in New Brunswick in 1805, the Rev. James Macgregor whimsically remarks of the remnants of the 42nd Regiment settled along the Nashwaak River: "A few of them have turned Baptists and Methodists, but the best and worst of them continue Presbyterians."[34]

The number of Methodists in the American colonies before the Revolution was relatively small. In New York there was but one church with a membership of two hundred. At the close of the war only sixty members remained.[35] In the other colonies similar losses were sustained. Because of the attitude of John Wesley towards the Revolution, his followers were, as a body, accused of being Tories. It is not surprising, therefore, to find a number of Methodists, including local preachers and church officers, among the refugees at Shelburne and St. John. Two classes, one white and the other black, were organized at Shelburne by former leaders of the New York Society in 1783. The status of Methodists in relation to the Established Church was

32 *The Halifax Journal*, Feb. 18, 1785. The letter is a public acknowledgment of gratitude to Mr. David Thompson for a gift of land for a church, and requests his aid in Britain. It is dated Shelburne, Dec. 4, 1784.

33 The petition, dated 1788, is printed in Gregg, *Presbyterian Church*, 129 ff. Government aid to the Presbyterians at Shelburne was opposed by Bishop Inglis in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Sept. 13, 1788, *Canadian Archives, 1894*, 226. A petition for help from the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland also failed (Gregg, *Presbyterian Church*, 127 ff.).

34 Patterson, *James McGregor*, 351.

35 J. B. Wakeley, *Lost Chapters Recovered from the Early History of American Methodism* (New York, 1858), 293.

at that period still uncertain. They were frequently regarded as a part of the Church, and as a consequence received special consideration from the government. Dr. Bryenton, the aged rector of St. Paul's in Halifax, is reported to have greeted the Methodist itinerant, Freeborn Garrettson, with these words, "Sir, you are on a blessed errand; I will do what I can in assisting you. I desire to see the Gospel spread."[36]

It would seem, then, that despite the large proportion of Anglicans among the loyalist emigrants, there were sufficient Congregationalists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and Methodists to exert a considerable and widespread influence of dissent, which, added to the other factors in the situation, successfully obstructed Episcopal expansion.

Finally, among the factors which limited Anglicanism there must be included certain psychological effects of the frontier. Set down alone in the wilderness, the Loyalists inevitably succumbed to that process of "Indianization" which accompanies pioneer life. Not living in villages, as the early planters had, but perched on top of the North Mountain, or of some other hill in the midst of the vast acreage that each had been granted, the Loyalists suffered from loneliness, poverty, and fatigue. The author of *The Claim of the American Loyalists* (1788) paints a sad picture of his compatriots.

> Numbers in Nova Scotia have been supported by the charitable donations of their friends, the subjects of the American States. Many are labouring under the want of means to subsist themselves on their uncultivated farms; many, through the prospect of want, have died of broken hearts; and others have been driven, by their extreme distress, into *insanity*, and from insanity to SUICIDE, leaving their helpless widows and orphans to prolong their miserable existence on the cold charity of others.[37]

Exiles in a far country, forgotten by the government they had sacrificed so much to sustain, doomed with their children to endless toil and obscurity, they listened eagerly to the message of eternal love and mindfulness which was preached to them by some passing itinerant. Their intellectual and emotional natures, starved by the narrowness and harshness of their existence, welcomed the warmth and excitement of the revival meetings. Even where there was an Anglican church and minister available, he could not entirely supply this inner need; something far more primitive and spontaneous was required.

36 Bangs, *Freeborn Garrettson*, 162.

37 *The Claim of the American Loyalists Reviewed and Maintained* (London, 1788), vii.

It was here that the Newlight methods and the doctrines of Henry Alline came into their own. They had arisen out of the spiritual privations and desires of the first frontier, and now, on the lips of native-born preachers, they proved themselves to be the most satisfying and effective religion for a new generation of pioneers. Against the psychological forces of sympathetic likemindedness, mass suggestion and imitation, the conservative and often aged clergy of the Established Church were helpless. By the simple working of the well-known "law of spread," the growth of "enthusiasm" was resistless and cumulative. In the words of an Anglican historian, "The New Light movement . . . swept like a torrent over the western part of the province, and at one time threatened to completely swamp all organized religion in that part of the country."[38]

38 C. W. Vernon, *Bicentenary Sketches*, (Halifax, 1910), 15-16. It should be pointed out that many of the Anglican clergy were very inefficient. Cf., Inglis to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dec. 18, 1788; "Of the eleven missionaries of the province, four are diligent, three indifferent, and four harmful." *Canadian Archives, 1912*, 229.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FROM NEWLIGHT TO BAPTIST

"Without prejudice it may be said . . . that being unenlightened by knowledge, and united by delusion, animated by party spirit and carried away by religious zeal, they seem to vie with each other in the wildness and absurdity of their opinions and practices and they seem to breathe fire and vengeance against each other and against everybody else."

Rev. Hugh Graham, 1791

INTRODUCTION

The last fifteen years of the eighteenth century were years of religious ferment and readjustment in Nova Scotia. Solid Loyalist churchmen, discharged soldier-farmers, Yankee fishermen and the sons of Pre-Loyalist pioneers, argued and bargained with one another, and crowded into kitchens and barns to listen to the preaching of a travelling Methodist, a fervent Newlight, or a mud-stained colonial bishop. Materials for a complete account of the personal and social upheavals which took place before an equilibrium was finally restored are meagre and scattered. Such movements produce few written records. This much, however, is clear. Between the years 1784 and 1800 there was an increase of itinerant preaching throughout the province which resulted in a series of religious revivals during which, very often, the participants were carried to extremes of excitement and fanaticism. In this emotional tempest, the Church of England lost a large part of its membership, and the remnants of New England Congregationalism were transformed almost beyond recognition. Only the Presbyterians were able to withstand the storm with any degree of success, and even they suffered severe losses. With the turn of the century, a desire for order and discipline began to reappear. The emergence of the Baptist Association in 1800, and its adoption of close communion in 1809, mark the end of the reign of enthusiasm and the beginning of a new moralism. The final break of the Nova Scotian Methodists with the American Conference and their affiliation with the Wesleyan Conference of England in 1800 were also signs that the churches were settling down. Not that revivals ceased, but thenceforward the energy they generated was directed into the ordinary channels of denominational

activity. In the following pages an attempt will be made to trace the course of this development.

THE ITINERANTS

Bishop Inglis' complaint that his diocese was being troubled by the teachings of "ignorant mechanics and common laborers" who went about exciting the people "to a pious frenzy"[1] probably referred to both Methodists and Newlights. As has already been shown, William Black, though still a layman, had begun to give his full time to Methodist preaching before the arrival of the Loyalists. Among the refugees at Shelbourne he found John and James Mann, the former a local preacher and class leader of the Methodist church in New York.[2] Both these men joined him in the task of spreading Methodism throughout the settlements. In 1784, in response to a personal appearance of Black at the famous "Christmas Conference" at Baltimore, the newly organized American Methodist Church appointed Elders Garrettson and Cromwell as missionaries to Nova Scotia. During the next ten years, eleven itinerants were sent to the British province by the American church. Four of the local Nova Scotian preachers were also ordained by the American Conferences.[3] In addition to these, the Methodist plan of having every member enrolled in a weekly class developed a large number of local exhorters and class leaders on every circuit, bringing the total number of Methodist teachers at any one time during the last decade of the century up to twenty-two or twenty-three. Nor did the Methodists rely entirely upon the spoken message. As early as 1786, Garrettson requested Wesley for books to sell and give to the poor.[4] Preachers were diligent in the circulation of Wesley's sermons and journals and "dear Mr. Fletcher's *Works*." More than one example of loyalists who were led to Methodism by the reading of these books are contained in the journals of the early ministers. They gave to Methodism a rational basis which otherwise was completely lacking. The cultural effect of the widespread reading of this literature has never been appraised, but that it had a deep intellectual and moral influence cannot be doubted. At the close of the cen-

1 See above page 1.
2 Wakeley, *Lost Chapters*, ch. 28.
3 After 1794 the growing needs of the west prevented the American church from sending more men to the Maritimes. In 1800, therefore, Black turned to the British Wesleyan Conference for aid, and the connection with the United States was severed.
4 Bangs, *Freeborn Garrettson*, 175.

tury there were 850 class members and 3000 adherents of Methodism in the Maritime Provinces.[5]

Passing now to the other types of itinerants, throughout this period Baptists and Newlights worked in such close co-operation that it is very difficult to make a sharp distinction between their preachers. In many cases a man was a Newlight itinerant for several years and then became a Baptist. Thomas Handley Chipman of Annapolis had been immersed in 1779 but was ordained a Newlight. The practice of mixed-communion was general; in fact, for many years a church organized by the Rev. John Burton in 1794 at Halifax was the only close-communion Baptist church in the province.[6] At Cornwallis, separate rolls of baptized and unbaptized members were kept by the church, as well as lists of persons "under watch and care," who desired to be members, but were unable to give a satisfactory account of their conversion. The minister administered both forms of baptism as required.[7]

The same general laxity existed with regard to ordination. Many of the Newlight leaders preached for years before they were ordained. None of them appears to have been actually commissioned like Henry Alline to the itinerant ministry, but the words "Publick Pastor and Teacher" occur, and the assumption is that he will preach wherever "God in his Providence shall call him."[8] No provision was made for the physical wants of these men, except perhaps a horse from their father's barn. Most of them had very little book-learning; they were children of the Spirit intent upon saving souls. The biographer of Harris Harding, one of the most outstanding of the Newlights, remarks of him, that "when he came under the saving power of the Gospel he seems to have thought only of following his impulses."[9] Sometimes those impulses led him right across the province by blazed trails through the forests. When he found melted hearts among the disillusioned and sorrowing Loyalists or New Englanders he gathered them into a church by a simple cove-

5 Smith, *Methodism*, I, 343. *Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (N. Y., 1840), I, 57, records 1100 members in Nova Scotia for the year 1794. In addition to the missionaries mentioned above, there were also three or four preachers of the Lady Huntingdon Connection in the provinces before 1790.

6 Saunders, *History of Baptists*, 72.

7 In 1799 there were 73 immersed members, 46 unimmersed and 20 under watch and care. *Ibid.*, 136.

8 See ordination certificates of John Payzant, *Ibid.*, 133, and of Harris Harding, John Davis, *Life and Times of Harris Harding* (Charlottetown, 1866), 68.

9 *Ibid.*, 16.

nant "to get good and do good."[10] So long as a man was inwardly converted, the mere externals of religion were considered unessential. This was quite in keeping with Alline's teaching; also by emphasing the supremacy of the spiritual over mere outward ceremonial, it gave the rude itinerant a powerful psychological weapon against the Anglican churches.

No examples of the early sermons of Alline's successors have survived. Their fervent messages were delivered extemporaneously as the Spirit moved them. From a fairly large collection of letters and contemporary reminiscences, however, it is possible to get some idea of their preaching. "They had more experience than doctrine," wrote one who knew them well, "more imagination than judgment, more of the ideal than the substantial."[11] The application of texts was intensely personal, the preacher often identifying himself and his hearers with Biblical characters in a most startling manner. Harris Harding often moved around among his listeners, exhorting individuals face to face.[12] He also placed great emphasis upon his dreams and visions, which not infrequently enabled him to foretell the successful outcome of some evangelistic effort.[13] All these elements were woven into the preacher's discourse, together with the constant repetition of certain familiar phrases and the alternation of moods of hopeless despair and the most rapturous exaltation. The whole was couched in a maze of scriptural and allegorical phraseology which is almost unintelligible to the modern reader, but which appears to have been quite characteristic of this movement. For example, Edward Manning wrote from the St. John River:

> Near twenty souls, if not more, have found God to be all in all; they live in green pastures and grow as calves in the stall. Ah! blessed be the name of God, I see a man with a drawn sword in his hand as captain of

10 Covenant of Onslow Church (1785), *Ibid.*, 23.

11 Letter of Rev. David Nutter, quoted *Ibid.*, 184.

12 *Ibid.*, 207. Some of his hearers were so afraid of his exhortations that they escaped out of the windows.

13 E. G., *Ibid.*, 206, "I dreamed I was on board a small sailboat, with Deacon Cleveland, and a number of my dear Christian friends at Horton. Me thought I stood upon the gunwale of the boat, having a spear in my hand. . . . The water also was as clear as crystal; and I could see the white and shining fishes at the bottom, while I was continually catching them with the spear. My friends, I thought, were sitting speaking of Christ's love to a fallen world, their cheeks bathed with tears, and apparently filled with peace and joy. I thought the deacon said to me, 'You catch every fish you strike.' I replied, 'I miss none.' Methought I fished until I had the boat filled; and then had a delicious feast with my fellow-disciples." This dream was taken to be prophetic of Harding's success on his approaching visit to Yarmouth.

the Lord's host. He is come, his voice is powerful and full of majesty and divides the flame of fire and shakes the wilderness. Ah! I see his star in the east, my brother, and I am come to worship him to Mount Zion, the city of the living God. O, my brother, the good of the land is before us and all behind us is barren wilderness. . . . Blessed be God, I see the horse and his rider thrown into the depths of the sea. The Israelites come forth shining and travel three days journey with incredible haste, which the Egyptians essaying to do are drowned in the dragon's flood. I have seen the foundations of the world discovered; and O, my brother, such scenes of horror and darkness as would make your very soul shudder to think of. Hell from beneath has been enlarged against the strength of Israel; but it never fails—no, my brother, nor never will.[14]

Such words, delivered with all the passion and fervor of a strongly emotional nature, to an audience keyed to a high pitch of excitement and expectancy, had a tremendous effect. Small wonder that from Annapolis, Liverpool, Chester and Barrington there were reports of revival phenomena similar to those which had occurred in New England in 1740, and that some of the hearers cried out, "This is the Gospel that brought salvation to my soul under Henry Alline."[15]

Just how much of Alline's mystical theology was continued in the preaching of his successors it is difficult to say. The earliest account of Newlight doctrines is found in the writings of the Methodist itinerant, Freeborn Garrettson in 1785.

1. They think they can tell whether a person is a Christian at first sight.
2. They say that we are leading people blindfolded to hell.
3. They are, they say, as sure of heaven as if they were already there, for sin cannot hurt them.[16]

In 1789, the Rev. Jacob Bailey reported to the S.P.G., from Annapolis Royal:

These preachers, however, agree in rejecting the literal sense of the Holy Scriptures, and the Christian Ordinances. Their dependance is upon certain violent emotions, and they discourage industry, charity, and every social virtue, affirming that the most abandoned sinners are nearer to the Kingdom of Heaven than people of a sober, honest and religious deportment, for such they alledge, are in danger of depending upon their own righteousness.[17]

A third contemporaneous account is found in Bishop Inglis' correspondence, where both Newlights and Methodists are bitterly attacked.

14 Quoted in Saunders, *History of Baptists*, 37-38.
15 Davis, *Harris Harding*, 29.
16 Bangs, *Freeborn Garrettson*, 167.
17 Bartlett, *Frontier Missionary*, 222-223.

They are, however, rigid Predestinarians, hold that all mankind were present, and actually sinned with our primitive parents. After conversion they are not answerable for any sins they commit, since it is the flesh and not the spirit, which offends. Those who die in infancy they consign over to damnation. Many of them deny the resurrection, a future judgment, heaven and hell, though the Elect are to be happy and the Reprobates miserable after death. Their discipline is democratic. The right of ordination, dismission, etc. lies entirely with the Brethren.[18]

Finally, in 1801, Joshua Marsden, the Wesleyan missionary at Cumberland, gave the following quaint account of Newlight doctrines.

1st. 'That a believer, though he sin never so much, is still pure;—God sees no sin in Israel.'
2nd. 'That the body of a believer only sins, and not the soul; as a nut thrown into the mud is only soiled in the shell, and not the kernel.'
3rd. 'That the body of a believer may get intoxicated and commit whoredom, but not the soul; that being spiritual is not affected by such fleshly lusts.'
4th. 'That a sheep though he render himself filthy by going into the mud, and black, by rubbing against the stumps of burned trees, is a sheep still, as nobody ever heard of a sheep becoming a goat.[19]

All these accounts stress the importance placed by the Newlights on the perseverance of the saints. Evidently this was the one doctrine of Alline's theology which made the deepest impression upon his followers. Naturally it led to the charge of antinomianism. The Newlights, in earnest endeavor to avoid dependence on any merely human or external agency for salvation, doubtlessly went to extremes in asserting the pre-eminently spiritual nature of their salvation and eternal preservation. William Black asserts that some of the Newlights even claimed that, "No unconverted man ought to pray: it keeps him from Christ, and he will never be converted till he leaves off praying."[20] Actual evidence of immorality among the Newlights, however, is entirely wanting. Indeed, it is probable that much of their antinomianism was simply an attempt to exhibit their independence of the older churches, and the superiority of their religion to that of bishop and presbyter. Certainly, the Newlight ministers as well as the Methodists preached constantly against the dangers of worldliness, and the moral peril of cardplaying, dancing, drunkenness, and carnal mirth. Alline's doc-

18 Quoted in Vernon, *Bicentenary Sketches*, 152.
19 Joshua Marsden, *The Narrative of a Mission* (Plymouth-Dock, 1816), 49.
20 Richey, *William Black*, 168.

trine of perseverance merely provided a theological cloak for the natural individualism and self-conceit of the frontiersman.

The large amount of space in *Two Mites* and *The Anti-Traditionist* devoted to the origin of sin does not appear to have left many traces in the teaching of the itinerants. Only Bishop Inglis makes reference to it, or to the belief in a spiritual resurrection.[21] It would seem, therefore, that most of the mystical theology which Alline borrowed from William Law perished with him, as far as Nova Scotia was concerned. The preaching of the newer converts was concerned with the more practical problems of redemption, sanctification, and the spreading of the revival. In these matters they shared not only the attitudes of Alline, but the whole heritage of New England revivalism. Theirs was a religion of feeling, and the one important thing was to feel their Savior.

A PIOUS FRENZY

As a result of the preaching of the itinerants, religious enthusiasm became almost province-wide during the last decade of the eighteenth century. It was not confined to mass-meetings but burst out spontaneously in small groups and in family circles. A letter from Betsy Parker of Nictaux presents a dramatic picture of what must have happened in many backwoods communities.

"Mr. Chipman (Thomas Handley Chipman) preached at John Gates.' After sermon Allan Gates prayed and John Gates spoke. Nathaniel and Polly Dodge were very much distressed and she could not speak for an hour. Freelove was in dreadful distress and Samuel likewise, and Charles was very happy in his mind and looked very solemn. Freelove called upon her father to see the torments of hell and it was a sight to behold—a father and five children all in the hands of a just God. . . . On Monday evening several of us went up to my brother Nathaniel's, and God was there, for I felt him in my soul. Henry prayed and Allen Chipman and several others, and the next evening there was a meeting at Obadiah Morse's and it was such a wonderful meeting; I had pity for poor sinners. I could forget myself, but I could not forget poor sinners, when I see where they stand. Peter Morse, ten years old, was converted and Nan Chipman came out and owned her God and rejoiced in Him. Alline Chipman shouted and rejoiced, sinners were crying out for mercy and saints were rejoicing.

21 In his *Journal*, Sept. 1, 1791, Inglis relates some particulars concerning the Newlights, told him by a friend. "The New Lights ascribe divine attributes to the Devil believing him to be eternally coexistent with God; they pray for the Devil; deny the resurrection, &c." (*Canadian Archives, 1913*, 257-258). While this is only hearsay, it may represent some remnants of Alline's doctrine of the fall.

. . . Methinks I long to go forth in the strength of the Lord God of Hosts and make mention of his righteousness, and his only."[22]

Betsy Parker was not the only one of her sex who felt the urge to preach. The activity of Mrs. Sarah Bancroft, the Granville "prophetess," aroused wide interest throughout the province.[23]

In 1791 there were revivals in all the districts where Alline's influence had been felt. "I can tell you," wrote Joseph Dimock from Granville, "that all I have ever seen before is small in comparison with what I have seen here. . . . Some meetings have continued all night; and O, the heavy heart-rending cries would answer each other, enough to pierce the stoutest heart. . . . If you go out here just after dark you will hear some lamenting themselves, on account of their dreadful hardened state; others mourning for others, till tears interrupt them, then they sob and cry; then begin and cry aloud for them as if they would bring heaven down to men by groans unutterable . . . . The people often thronged to meeting sometimes from fifteen or twenty miles distant. Often I have known young females to come twelve miles on foot on Lord's day morning before we had breakfast."[24]

In the face of such enthusiasm, the other denominations were helpless. The Rev. Jonathan Scott of Chebogue, the only remaining representative of Old Light Congregationalism, discovered that his people "would receive neither his reproof, nor instruction, and Church Discipline was at an end."[25] His meager stipend, already sadly in arrears, remained unpaid. Finally in 1792, this doughty champion of orthodoxy moved to Minot, Maine, leaving Yarmouth to the mercy of the enthusiasts.

The fate of the other Congregational churches was similar. Old Zion Meeting House at Liverpool was the center of almost constant controversy between rival sects for ten years. Finally, by a vote of the proprietors in 1793, it passed definitely into the hands of the Newlights, who called Henry Alline's brother-in-law, John Payzant to be their minister. At Chester, the aged John Seccomb died in 1792 and was succeeded by the Newlight, Joseph Dimock. At Cornwallis, the Old Lights despairing of

22 Quoted in Saunders, *History of Baptists*, 38.
23 Inglis, *Journal*, 251.
24 Quoted in Saunders, *History of Baptists*, 36.
25 Jebogue Records, 189ff.

finding a Congregational minister, appealed to the Associate Synod of Glasgow, and, with the arrival of the Rev. Hugh Graham in 1785, the church declared itself to be Presbyterian. In 1807, when the Newlight church in Cornwallis was split on the question of baptism, certain "Congregationalists who could not be Presbyterians and Newlights who would not be Baptists" proceeded to ordain one of their own members, Mr. John Pineo, to be their "Pasturer."[26]

The Presbyterians also profited by the situation in the Dissenters Meeting House in Halifax. This wealthy, mercantile church had, of course, remained aloof from all forms of enthusiasm. During the Revolution, however, it suffered considerably in prestige because of the rebel sympathies of many of its members. The climax was reached when Governor Parr received a letter from Sir Guy Carleton informing him that the Halifax Dissenters were negotiating with Dr. Witherspoon of New Jersey College, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, for a minister. Henceforth, by a policy of vigilance aimed "to defeat and deter such pernicious doctrines as may be expected from the disciples of such a master," the Dissenters were quietly but firmly steered towards Scottish Presbyterianism, which was already firmly and loyally entrenched among the Highland settlers of eastern Nova Scotia.[27]

The Congregational Church at Maugerville, which had renewed its covenant under Henry Alline, had a chequered career in the post-revolutionary period. For a long time it was supplied by loyalist clergymen of the Church of England; and later by a Calvinistic Methodist. The tendency seems to have been for the congregation to split into small factions, each espousing the doctrines of some local leader. A letter among the *Winslow Papers* mentions four such sects in 1792, "the Hammondites, the Brookites, Palmerites, and last and worst of all the Pearlyites or Burpeites." These names refer to the leaders or founders of the sects, Lathrop Hammond, who founded a Baptist church at Prince William in 1800 and was also the author of a book of religious poetry; Elijah Estabrooks, a Newlight from Waterborough; Daniel Palmer, a ruling elder at Maugerville, Israel Perley and David Burpee, both prominent members of the Mau-

26 Eaton, *Kings County*, 317. During the 19th century the name Newlight was dropped, and, as the Kingsport Congregational Church, this church entered the United Church of Canada in 1925.

27 Murray, "History of St. Matthew's Church," *N.S.H.S.*, XVI, 164.

gerville church. Another contemporary lists also "the Hartites" or followers of the Baptist, T. S. Harding, who visited the river in 1799.[28]

The activities of these various groups of enthusiasts, operating in an isolated community already divided by political and social cleavages and demoralized by hardship and disillusionment, resulted in an amazing outburst of fanaticism. A number of contemporary accounts of extravagances that occurred have been preserved. The earliest and most detailed is by Patrick Campbell, a British soldier who visited the St. John Valley in 1791.

I set out from Frederick Town on foot; and walking through Maugerville along the river side, I fell in with a gentleman travelling the same way. As we were conversing along, I heard a great noise in a house at some distance, on which I stopped to listen, and told the gentleman that there were some people fighting in that house; at which he smiled and answered, "That he knew the place well; that it was a house of worship, where a number of religious fanatics preached, every one prayed for himself, and the louder they roared, the more sincere and devout they were supposed to be; so that the one vied with the other who should bawl out loudest." When we had come nearer I was struck with amazement at the hideous noise they made, and which could be heard at a considerable distance; I asked him if he supposed they would permit me to go in to see them; he said I might, provided I behaved properly, and did not laugh, or offer to ridicule them in any shape; that they would not prevent me, or give me the least trouble; thus encouraged, I went in, and found they consisted of about three score persons, of both sexes, all on their knees, and in tears, every one praying for himself, as already said, and bawling out, O Lord! O Lord! which were the only expressions I understood of what they said. After standing for a few minutes in the house, my hair almost standing on end at the horror of the scene these miserable people exhibited, I returned, and just as I was passing the window of their apartment, some one called out, that the devil was among them; upon which they all gave a yell, louder and more horrible than any Indian war hoop I had ever heard; and if the devil himself was to show his physiognomy in all the frightful grimaces ascribed to him in the middle of them, every door bolted, so that none could escape his clutches, their screaming could not have been louder or more horrible. I returned to the road with deep impressions of the deplorable effects of fanaticism on the human mind.[29]

28 *Winslow Papers*, 392 ff.

29 Campbell, *Travels*, 255-256.

Rev. Duncan McColl gives some further details concerning the ultimate end of these people. "Five and twenty of them fell under the influence of pride, and began to pretend to preeminence in the Spirit's power and experience. They separated from the rest and became extravagant indeed. They soon undertook to prophesy, and to speak with new tongues, and to work miracles. . . . They sometimes broke into other public meetings and scattered the congregations. . . . They went on from bad to worse, until the authorities took them up, and put

Such scenes were not confined to the St. John River. For many years at Yarmouth there had been some who opposed "extravagency in Dress." At the height of the revival under the Newlight, Harris Harding, some of the new converts took up this old shred of Puritanism and proclaimed that "frills, ruffles, and all adornments in dress" were sinful. Fires were lighted and their finery consigned to the flames. Others, believing crockery and china to be "earthly treasure," took their dishes from the shelves and buried them in the ground. There were processions through the streets at night, crying, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!" Public and detailed confession of sins added to the confusion. When Mr. Harding attempted to restrain his followers, they attacked him in public, openly contradicting his statements, and some of the more ardent "sisters" even ascended the pulpit and, standing at the minister's side, commanded him to hold his peace.[30]

To such a level had New England Congregationalism descended after forty years in the wilderness.

A RAGE FOR DIPPING

Amid all this pious frenzy one definite trend is discernible, that is the increase of Baptist sentiment and practice. It can be traced in the individual churches, such as Newport, Cornwallis, Annapolis, Yarmouth and Chester, all of which had become Baptist by the year 1800. It can also be seen in the new churches which sprang up around the turn of the century. For example, a Newlight Church was organized in 1798 at Lower Granville, but in the following year when Enoch Towner and seven men from Sisaboo and Digby Neck sought the aid of this church in forming a church of their own, they were immersed and constituted into "the Sisaboo Baptist Church."[31] At Sackville, N.B., a revival under Joseph Crandall, a new convert himself, resulted in the formation of a close-communion Baptist church in 1799. In the following year in the dead of winter Crandall visited the

two of the leaders in prison, where they were kept for several months. They then denied the truth of all religion and became a very gay and dressy people . . . . they soon dispersed, sold their good farms, and moved up the river. . . . These were not the poor, or the uninformed, but people in good standing in the world." Quoted in Smith, *Methodism*, I, 261 ff. According to local tradition, some of these people went crawling about like wild beasts with others riding on their backs.

30 Davis, *Harris Harding*, 102.

31 I. H. Wilson, *A Geography and History of Digby County* (Halifax, 1901), 90.

St. John Valley. At Kingsclear, fourteen persons were immersed in the icy waters. At Waterborough, Elijah Estabrooks and his entire Newlight society (the Brooksites) were baptized.[32] Immersion seemed to act like a catalysing agent among the divided religious parties of Maugerville. The whole countryside was swept by a wave of solemn emotion, which increased as the spring advanced. One night baptisms were conducted by the light of blazing birch-bark torches. An eye-witness has left a dramatic account of that scene.

> A large congregation stood by the river, powerfully excited by the unusual circumstances of the meeting, some heartily sympathizing, some struggling with their emotions and perhaps some few disposed to mock. The stillness of the night was broken by the voice of prayer and praise. The loud tones of the preacher's voice were heard at a great distance, and many a slumberer was aroused by the strange sounds which fell on his ears.[33]

A less sympathetic account of the rise of the Baptists comes from the pen of Bishop Inglis, who had himself entered the combat in Annapolis County in order "to offset the work of the fanatics." After describing first, how the Methodists held meetings where "ignorant men and women and even children under twelve years of age were employed to pray and exhort, until the whole assembly groaned, and screamed, and finally ended with a falling down and a rolling upon the floor of both sexes together," he goes on to say:

> The New Lights, however, far exceed the Methodists, both in the extravagance of their conduct, and in the absurdity of their sentiments; for to the aforementioned instances they add Dreams, Visions, Recitations, Prophecies and Trances. A rage for dipping or total immersion prevails all over the western counties of the Province, and is frequently preformed in a very indelicate manner, before vast collections of people. . . . On the Saturday preceding these solemnities the preacher sits above the congregation with a number of select brethren on lower benches appointed to assist him. Before this tribunal the people are brought forward, often by compulsion, to relate their experiences, and if they consent to be dipped, they are solemnly pronounced to be converted. People come together at these meetings from a distance of seventy miles, leaving their families often in destitute circumstances, their plantations exposed to ruin. All order and decorum are despised by them. Fierce dissentions prevail among the most intimate; family government is dissolved; children are neglected and become disobedient.[34]

32 Saunders, *History of Baptists*, 77 ff.
33 *Ibid.*, 79.
34 The full text of Inglis's report is printed in Saunders, *op. cit.*, 115; and in Vernon, *Bicentenary Sketches*, 151.

CAUSES OF THE TREND TOWARDS BAPTIST DOCTRINE

The foregoing survey reveals that by the year 1800 New England Congregationalism had almost entirely disappeared in the Maritime Provinces; only two churches of the standing order continued to maintain a precarious and uncertain existence at Chebogue and Maugerville; while of the many Newlight churches, which had flourished in the decade immediately following the American Revolution, only scarred remnants remained at Liverpool and Cornwallis. Some of the churches had become Presbyterian or Anglican, but the majority were assimilated in the rapidly expanding Baptist organization. The causes of this transformation are to be found, partly in the failure of New England Congregationalism to adapt itself to the needs of the new frontier, and partly, in the strong appeal which Baptist doctrine and discipline made to the rising generation.

From the beginning the Congregational churches of Nova Scotia had received but scant assistance from their mother churches in New England. This was, doubtless, due to the lack of a unified missionary program which left the matter of supporting destitute churches to individual action. It was also due in part to the general decline in religion during the Revolutionary period. The war raised additional barriers in the way of ministerial and financial aid from the United States. The Nova Scotia government disapproved of "republican" ministers coming into the province. The churches were thus thrown back upon their own resources. Even in the United States these had proved inadequate to meet the new conditions created by the rapidly expanding frontier. "Their platforms and polity," writes Dr. William Warren Sweet, "were devised for a homogeneous population, and for 'a narrow home use,' and were not adapted to aggressive action on a national scale."[35] They could not compete with the more mobile tactics of the enthusiasts. Their formalism and their lifeless dogmas were a handicap and a hindrance. In contrast to their dull sermons, read with precision and careful attention to logic and scripture, the Newlight itinerant preached extemporaneously from a text handed him at the meeting-house door, perfectly confident that his utterances were inspired by the Holy Ghost. The children of the log-cabins

35 W. W. Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier*: III, *The Congregationalists* (Chicago, 1939), 11.

listened to both, and they were convinced that one was a religion of form, and the other a religion of power. They beheld the frenzied gestures and tears of the itinerant, and their hearts were touched, a wave of sympathetic likemindedness swept over them. The religion of power must also be the religion of salvation. Not only Congregationalists but also large numbers of Loyalist Anglicans succumbed to the spirit of the revival.

Newlight religion, however, though it was the expression of the religious needs and democratic instincts of the frontier, lacked stability. It was individualistic, and depended far too much on the whims and impulses of "the elect." In time the novelty was bound to wear off, and the words of the most inspired prophet become trite and hackneyed. There was a reaction from emotional extravagance towards something more rational and permanent. Both the Methodist and Baptist churches offered such an alternative. They were both akin to the Newlights in methods and in their attitude towards formal religion, indeed in Nova Scotia they were often referred to as Methodist Newlights and Baptist Newlights,[36] but they both provided certain checks to antinomianism and excessive enthusiasm. The *General Rules* of the Methodist societies welded their membership into a closely knit organization directed by the District Meeting or local Conference. Unharnessed energies were brought into line or else turned away. The one weakness of the Methodist system was that the strictness of its rules concerning preachers prevented many local leaders from becoming itinerants, and therefore denominational expansion was continually hindered by lack of ministers. The circuits assigned to the little band of preachers sent to the province by the American or British Conferences were so large that their visits to any one particular settlement were not frequent enough to hold the outer fringe of enthusiasts and young people who might otherwise have become valuable members of the societies. The result was that Methodism did not grow as rapidly as it might have under the circumstances, and lost considerable ground to the Baptists.

The Baptists were not hindered by any denominational requirements for the ordination of ministers. Like the Newlights, each local church was capable and prepared to ordain whenever it was necessary to have a new preacher. Thus at the close of the century Enoch Towner, Joseph Crandall, Elisha Estabrooks,

36 Bill, *Fifty Years*, 16.

and others were ordained to meet the needs of new congregations. More significant, however, was the gradual adherence of the older Newlight ministers to Baptist principles. Had they remained unimmersed, the progress of the Baptists would have been greatly retarded. The causes of their change lay partly in the tremendous appeal which immersion made to their generation, and partly in a conscious reaction from the confusion and disorder into which their churches had been carried by the practice of unrestrained emotionalism.

From the beginning there had been a considerable Baptist element in the townships. These had continued to insist that immersion was the only scriptural form of baptism, and that it must follow a profession of belief in Christ. With the undermining of all outward forms of religion which followed the spread of Newlight teachings, the case for infant baptism became even less important. The Biblical commands to baptize, however, could not be ignored. More and more the ordinance was combined with a mystical identification of the believer with the dying and risen Lord. Converts were urged by their Baptist brethren to follow Christ into the water. When they did, in some pond or river, sometimes through holes in the ice, the large congregation of spectators who had gathered was deeply impressed. While they might tell themselves that forms of baptism were unessential, nevertheless the example of these courageous converts stirred a desire to imitate them. In the highly wrought emotionalism of the crowd the psychological laws of suggestion, imitation, and sympathy acted with increasing effectiveness. "The young converts were so happy, they could hardly wait their turn," wrote T. H. Chipman from Yarmouth. "Four or five hundred people surrounded the watery grave, and it was wonderful to see the young converts going round among the people as they came up out of the cold water, praising the Lord and exhorting others to come to the Saviour," wrote Joseph Crandall from New Brunswick. "The work of the Lord spread in every direction."[37]

It was in vain that members of the older pedobaptist churches protested. "Do you not call us a church of Christ?" asked an old New England Congregationalist on the St. John

37 Saunders, *History of Baptists*, 77-78. The movement spread by reputation also; Crandall relates that in 1800 on the St. John River boatloads of anxious enquirers came to him, "for they had heard about such numbers being immersed that many of them had been led to read their Bibles and were purposed to yield obedience to the Lord's commands."

River. "Sir," replied the enthusiast, "I consider you are a company of pious Christians, but not walking in the order of the Gospel as commanded by Christ." In the face of such aggressive teaching even the older Newlight ministers wavered; at first they accepted baptism only personally and without any attempt to carry their congregations with them, but later they zealously insisted upon it as a requirement for full communion.

The other motive which led directly to the change was the desire of the Newlight leaders to restore some measure of order and discipline within their churches. The apostles of enthusiasm themselves became alarmed at the excesses and extravagances of their converts. Not only the organized churches were seen to be disintegrating because of the lack of common purpose and direction, but the morality of the members themselves was being questioned in many quarters because of the unbridled liberty of some of those who claimed that their own inner light superseded the revelations contained in the Word of God. The charge of antinomianism was constantly hurled at them by Methodists and churchmen. As British reaction to the extremes of the French Revolution spread to the colony, all such democratic movements came under suspicion. The sectaries had often been accused of republicanism, now they were charged with fomenting rebellion. In his famous report to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts in 1799, Bishop Charles Inglis sounded the alarm.

> Their (the Newlights') political principles are equally dangerous with their religious. It is believed that the conductors of these people are engaged in the general plan of *a total revolution in religious and civil government*. And it's a certain fact, that 'The Rights of Man,' 'The Age of Reason,' 'Volney on the Ruin of Empires,' 'A False Representation of the French Revolution,' with scandalous invectives against all the crowned heads in Europe, and against the British Administration in particular, have been secretly handed about by professed Newlights.[38]

How much of this was simply unfounded suspicion similar to the hysteria roused in New England over the supposed activities of the Bavarian "*Illuminati*,"[39] it is difficult to say. The Halifax newspapers frequently carried advertisements for the latest books, but it is extremely doubtful if the Newlight minis-

38 Inglis to S. P. G., 1799, printed in Bill, *Fifty Years*, 189-191; Saunders, *History of Baptists*, 115.

39 Cf., Vernon Stauffer, *New England and the Bavarian Illuminati* (New York, 1918), for interesting account of supposed conspiracy "to abolish Christianity and overthrow all civil government."

ters or people either bought them or read them. Their tastes were far different, and they were more apt to consider Tom Paine as an arch-heretic than as a political guide. Among the Loyalists there may have been considerable grumbling about the government, and perhaps some talk of "right," but that the revivalists were even remotely interested in such carnal matters, it is difficult to believe. Nevertheless, the Newlight leaders felt the need to remove the causes for all such suspicion. Hence, in 1797, after conferring together at Cornwallis, four of the ministers issued a circular stating their purpose "to walk together in fellowship as ministers of Jesus Christ, "and to hold an annual conference, "to know our minds and the state of the different churches standing in connection, by their delegates being sent by them."[40] At the first meeting of this self-styled "Baptist and Congregational Association," on June 15, 1798 at Cornwallis, at which six ministers were present, the questions of "the necessity of order and discipline in the churches" was uppermost on the agenda. "The ministers . . . continued until midnight in observing the dangerous tendency of erroneous principles and practices, and lamenting the unhappy consequences in our churches."[41] If these conditions were evident to the Newlights themselves, they must have been much more so to their rivals. Evidently the churches were threatened with intellectual and moral anarchy. The Rev. Harris Harding, who had been one of the most uninhibited and erratic enthusiasts, was charged by his brethren with "error" and with "treating lightly the ordinances of God's house." It was a sign of the changing times that, in reply, he acknowledged his mistakes and in a signed confession petitioned for pardon from his associates.[42]

At the second meeting of the Association, in June 1799, further steps were taken towards order and uniformity. The Rev. Edward Manning, who had only recently been immersed, was appointed to draw up a set of rules to govern the organization. These were presented at the third annual meeting, held at Lower Granville in 1800.

In the preamble to these Rules, the benefits of associating for the purpose of "maintaining more effectively the faith once

40 Saunders, *History of Baptists*, 84-85. The ministers were J. Payzant, T. H. Chipman, J. Manning and E. Manning.
41 Extracts from the minutes of the Association are printed *Ibid.*, 85. At this meeting H. Harding and J. Dimock were also present.
42 *Ibid.*, 85.

delivered to the saints—obtaining advice and counsel in cases of doubt and difficulty, and assistance in distress,—and in general being better able to promote the cause of God," are pointed out. The qualities of "prudence, judgment and knowledge, particularly in the Scriptures," are stressed, while the other more spectacular gifts of the Spirit so popular since Henry Alline's time are completely ignored. Most significant of all, the name "Congregational" was dropped, and the body was to be known as "The Nova Scotia Baptist Association." Only advisory powers were to be exercised, and the independence of particular churches was acknowledged, but the break with New England Congregationalism was otherwise complete. A correspondence was to be opened with the Baptist Associations in America and England.[43] In Rule 7, the faith and order of the Association is stated to be "the same as set forth by upwards of one hundred congregations in Great Britain in the year 1687, and adopted by the Association of Philadelphia in 1742."[44] It was pointed out that the leading principles of this Confession of Faith were

> . . . the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity; the inability of man to recover himself; effectual calling by Sovereign grace; justification by imputed righteousness; immersion for baptism on profession of faith and repentance; the congregational mode of worship and discipline; and the independence of churches and reception of members upon evidence of sound conversion.[45]

How far the Newlight-Baptist pastors had drifted from the teachings of Henry Alline is at once apparent. The whole mystical account of the fall and redemption of man was abandoned, and the churches returned once more to the old doctrine of imputation. The Calvinism of the London Confession differed but slightly from that of the Westminister Assembly, against which the *Anti-Traditionist* had protested so vehemently. It is true that the Association had only advisory powers, and did not pretend to dictate to the churches what they should believe. Probably the adoption of a creed at all was more for the purpose of informing their adversaries of the matter of their

43 The Rules of the Association are printed in full in Bill, *Fifty Years*, 36-39. The connection with the New England Baptists was strengthened by visits from fraternal delegates from Maine after 1807.

44 Cf., E. B. Underhill, *Confessions of Faith and Other Public Documents . . . of the Baptist Churches of England in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1854), 169 ff. This confession was a rescission of the Westminster Confession; A. H. Newman, *A History of the Baptist Churches in the United States* (New York, 1904), 55.

45 Bill, *Fifty Years*, 38-39.

faith, and thus meeting the criticisms which were being leveled at them, than it was to impose a standard of orthodoxy upon their own members. Nevertheless, it was a drastic change in policy, and since the Association could refuse fellowship to churches which did not accept the Confession, there was a certain measure of infringement upon the rights of the local congregation involved.[46] The inner light was no longer considered sufficient for the guidance of the churches; respectability, sound judgment, and organization had become a necessity.

The revolution did not pass unchallenged. The Rev. John Payzant of Liverpool, the oldest of the Newlight preachers, refused to be immersed, and with his church, remained outside the Association. His letter to the "Christian Brethren at Windsor, Falmouth, Horton and Cornwallis," written July 28, 1808, is the last flicker of the "New Light."

> Dear brethren in Christ,—I heard of the melancholy state you are in because of imposition. Remember, that you are not your own, but are bought with a price, therefore belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.
>
> When I was with you last I saw you were in a trying position, and them that ought to have gathered you, were the very ones that scattered you; and what was it for, but to maintain the unscriptural way of binding men's consciences with their tenets. The days are coming when the shadows shall flee away. O, how low the sun must be when they have so great shadow. My advice to you is to gather yourselves into a body, and if you have any that you look upon to be leading men, nominate them, then, write to us to send you such assistance as you stand in need of. . . .
>
> The close communion among the Baptists is an old Jewish tradition new vamped. . . . Blessed be God that true believers have the unity of the Spirit whereby they love one another, whether they have been sprinkled or dipped in water; for baptism is only an outward sign. . . . Such as dispute one or the other are carnal as men. . . . My brethren, the glorious day is coming when we shall be delivered from all these contentions. The ordinances were given for a blessed use. . . .[47]

The letter is signed "John Payzant (the aged)." Younger and more powerful voices were demanding a "strict observance of the New Testament order." For a few years, although immersion was the only form of baptism and admission to church membership, former pedobaptist members were permitted to continue in full communion. Such freedom was contrary to the practice among the American Baptists with whom the Association had established a formal connection. The crisis was reached in 1809. At the meeting of the Association at Corn-

46 Cf., W. W. Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America* (New York, 1942), 55.
47 The full text of the letter is printed in Saunders, *History of Baptists*, 87-88.

wallis, the Rev. Harris Harding entreated his brethren "to rely upon the divine influence with which the apostles were favoured . . . and not to be particular respecting external order or outward forms." The Rev. T. S. Harding replied that, "When the tabernacle was to be erected in the wilderness, divine direction was given respecting every part, even the loops and the curtains and the pins for the sacred vessels; and that the word of the Lord was: 'Look that thou make them after the pattern which was shown thee in the mount.'" The Rev. Henry Hale, messenger from the Baptist churches in Maine, warmly supported this latter view. Over the last lingering protest of tender New-light consciences "to hurt not the wine or the oil or to wound the tender of the flock," the Association voted "to withdraw fellowship from all churches who admit unbaptized persons to what is called occasional communion, and consider themselves a close-communion Baptist Association."[48]

The following year, the Rev. Daniel Merrill, messenger from the Baptist churches in Maine, reported to his brethren in the United States, "It is very pleasing to me to behold my beloved brethren in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, who have so lately emerged into gospel liberty, so expert in discipline, so determined in Christian order and communion, and so well marshalled in battle array . . . Fourteen years only have elapsed since but one baptized church was to be found in both provinces. Now they count fourteen."[49]

. Ecclesiasticism had triumphed; the cycle of the Great Awakening was completed; the revolt against the "forms of Godliness" was ended, and the Protestant Dissenters of Nova Scotia, after their brief but spectacular flight, laid aside the wings of the spirit and settled down to orderly and unexciting growth.[50]

48 *Ibid.*, 125-126; Four ministers and churches withdrew from the Association; T. H. Chipman, Annapolis; J. Dimock, Chester; E. Towner, Argyle; H. Harding, Yarmouth. The first two returned in 1811, but the others maintained a mixed membership until 1847 and 1828 respectively.

49 Quoted in Saunders, *History of Baptists*, 153. The churches were Granville, Digby, Cornwallis, Horton, Onslow, Newport, Halifax, Ragged Islands, Amherst, Sackville, Petitcodiac, Norton, Prince William, and Waterborough. The membership of these churches was about 850. The mixed communion churches at Annapolis, Chester, Yarmouth and Argyle had about 641 members in 1809.

50 G. E. Levy, *Baptists of the Maritime Provinces 1753-1946* (n. p., n. d.), appeared after the present volume had gone to press; it would seem to be a valuable complement of this work.

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